

THE CONSERVATION OF OTTOMAN ERA NEIGHBOURHOODS IN ISTANBUL: A
CASE STUDY OF ARNAVUTKOY, BESIKTAS

A Dissertation submitted for

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Abstract

This study aims to enlighten the characteristics of the Ottoman settlements in the Arnavutköy neighbourhood and their evolution throughout the time within the urban planning and how conservation is interpreted in Turkey and in international charters.

The Ottoman Empire was founded by Osman Bey and the dynasty ruled over 623 years. Great Architect Sinan has changed the urban pattern of Istanbul after its conquest by the Ottoman Empire.

The urban formation and development in the area will be comprehended with mapping analyses, and the socio economic, historical and architectural characteristics of the neighbourhood will be used as a guide to determine which areas to be conserved and how to designate urban sites and implement urban sustainability in the district.

In the case study of Arnavutköy, recommendations for future conservation analyses, area conservation proposal will be discussed in the research which is open-ended for further study.

The object is to identify urban conservation in the historic neighbourhood in comparison to designated urban sites in Turkey to preserve its authenticity and integrity and to analyse of problems related to conservation in urban planning. Possible solutions for future references will be determined by studying the guidelines of international charters both in a theoretical and practical context.

The definition of urban conservation and Turkish planning and legislation laws will be examined, and the urban identity of Arnavutköy will be presented in this work, including downsides of the area which is faced with the prospect of losing its historic fabric.

1. Introduction

1.1. The Aims and Objectives of the Study

The aim of the research is to understand the evolution of urban planning in Arnavutköy. This area is considered as a historic neighbourhood but so far there has been no discussion on the conservation issues related to this area and the transition from micro scale “building conservation” to macro scale “urban conservation.” The conservation definitions will be described and explained within the practical applications and theoretical solutions in Turkey, and the outcomes will be analysed within Arnavutköy to provide a better understanding of why this area is not considered as an urban conservation site, despite there being rehabilitation, renovation and restoration works. This will incorporate studies of building functions, listed buildings, street pattern, settlement units, their spatial organisation and characteristic features, later interventions, modern western impacts on the urban structure, previous projects that have been taken place in the area on urban scale and the integration of historic buildings into modern use in order to realise a better understanding of the conservation movement in the Turkish Republic.

It is intended to give a sense of where the urban pattern is integrated and where it has disintegrated and whether interventions are in harmony with the existing historic fabric. It is mostly noted that the area has undergone restoration works in building scale but it will be questioned that whether they are efficient in terms of urban conservation. In addition to the physical changes in built fabric, changing population and its effect on urban planning are also taken into the consideration in the research.

1.2. Research Methodologies

The research has been carried out through an extensive work both on the site at Arnavutköy, and by studying maps from the Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality, print, image sources from the libraries of Istanbul Technical University, Mimar Sinan University, Bahcesehir University, University of Edinburgh, Istanbul Chamber of Commerce, Istanbul Chamber of Architects, and Istanbul Research Institute. Furthermore, previous case studies in the area and archival works that have been carried out in the field of urban conservation were included in this study. Old and new photographs of the site, overlapping layers of old and new maps of Arnavutköy, diagrams, other iconographical sources to trace architectural and urban development and statistics about population and cultural context were used in determining the characteristic features of the neighbourhood. The facade analysis and the section from the most iconic street in Arnavutköy, Beyazgül Street will provide clues about historic traditionally built fabric and landform of the area. Interview with a lecturer who is a professional in the field of urban planning, restoration and architecture is also included. The question of why Arnavutköy is not accepted as an urban site and why there is no area conservation map will be asked, and for future recommendations, an urban conservation proposal for the district will be presented.

1.3. Literature Review

Arnavutköy is considered to be a preserved, an integrated and authentic neighbourhood of Istanbul with its changing urban pattern and urban conservation. The area has not been studied extensively, although a research states the significance of conservation both in the area and in the international meaning, it mainly examines “a touristic management plan for the historic neighbourhood in Arnavutköy.”¹ In this project, the main focus is not the urban

¹ Pınar Abacılar, “Cultural Tourism and Management in Natural and Urban Heritage Site Boğaziçi- Arnavutköy Sample” (master’s thesis, Istanbul Technical University, 2008), 169.

conservation planning in Arnavutköy, and therefore there is need for a proposal to determine which areas to include in the area conservation map.

Furthermore, the restoration works in building scale are not enough to provide an urban scale conservation work in the area. It is therefore recommended that Arnavutköy should be one of the designated urban conservation sites, with its 441 listed buildings and associated requirements, and must be clearly defined in order to maintain healthy, living, historic neighbourhoods in metropolitan cities like Istanbul. Sözen investigates the area extensively, especially Abdülhak Molla Street, and points out the conservation related difficulties in Arnavutköy. However, the field study is based “building survey, restitution and restoration work of the timber structure,”² which does not cover the historic core in the district and, although the architectural details of vernacular structures were extensively studied, it becomes inadequate in the field of urban conservation.

The main target of these case studies is to analyse the character of Arnavutköy, and examine the subjects of restoration and rehabilitation of structures and support the thesis of the study. However, the field studies or theories on the term of conservation become inadequate for the conservation Ottoman era neighbourhood, what it means in modern Turkey and international charters, and how it can be carried out in Arnavutköy. It is questioned that whether there will be further studies for Arnavutköy even after it becomes designated urban conservation site.

² Ekrem Sözen, “Arnavutköy Tarihi Dokusu İçinde Yer Alan Bir Yapı Adasının ve Bu Adadaki Ahşap Bir Konutun Sıhhileştirilmesi” (master’s thesis, Istanbul Technical University, 1995), 66.

2. Context

2.1. Conservation in Turkey

Definitions

Conservation is translated to Turkish as “muhafaza” or “koruma.” The description of the word “conserve” is to protect a living creature against external effects but it also means to take necessary precautions for structures or town sections which have historical or artistic value. In this respect, demolition of ruined historically significant structures or group of buildings is not considered as conservation. In Turkey, the term of conservation is not used in the meaning which is described as in the Burra Charter stating that, “means all the processes of looking after a *place* so as to retain its cultural significance.”³ The definition of conservation in the Venice Charters argues,

The conservation of a monument implies preserving a setting which is not out of scale.

Wherever the traditional setting exists, it must be kept. No new construction, the demolition or modification which would alter the relations of mass and colour must be allowed.⁴

In the Burra Charter restoration is defined as “returning the existing fabric of a place to a known earlier state by removing accretions or by reassembling existing components without the introduction of new material.”⁵ On the other hand, in the Venice Charter it explains that, Its aim is to preserve and reveal the aesthetic and historic value of the monument and is based on respect for original material and authentic documents. It must stop at the point where

³ Australia ICOMOS Burra Charter, “The Australia ICOMOS Charter for Places of Cultural Significance,” (Burwood, 1999) <http://australia.icomos.org/publications/charters/> (accessed July 30, 2013)

⁴ The Venice Charter, “International Charters for the Conservation and Restoration of Monuments and Sites,” (II. International Congress of Architects and Technicians of Historic Monuments, Venice, May 25, 1964) http://www.icomos.org/charters/venice_e.pdf (accessed July 30, 2013)

⁵ Australia ICOMOS Burra Charter, “The Australia ICOMOS Charter for Places of Cultural Significance,” (Burwood, 1999) <http://australia.icomos.org/publications/charters/> (accessed July 30, 2013)

conjecture begins, and in this case moreover any extra work which is indispensable must be distinct from the architectural composition and must bear a contemporary stamp. The restoration in any case must be preceded and followed by an archaeological and historical study of the monument.⁶

“Conservation of cultural heritage” means the preservation of moveable historical assets, however; in the course of time, the meaning of it with included preservation of immovable historical assets.⁷

Immovable cultural and natural assets are monuments and sites. These sites are categorized as historic, natural, archaeological, urban, rural, mixed sites.⁸ The streets, neighbourhoods, sites which preserved their historic layout, authenticity, architectural integrity are described as urban sites.⁹ There are two ways of conservation;

Conscious conservation: Within the conservation act, an individual historic monument or group of historical buildings to be protected with external interventions.¹⁰

Unconscious conservation: Without any conscious external interventions, it is a natural preservation and conservation process of its own.¹¹ Arnavutköy is one of the unconsciously conserved neighbourhoods in Istanbul. In Washington Charter in 1987, the designation of urban conservation areas include:

⁶ The Venice Charter, “International Charters for the Conservation and Restoration of Monuments and Sites,” (II. International Congress of Architects and Technicians of Historic Monuments, Venice, May 25, 1964) http://www.icomos.org/charters/venice_e.pdf (accessed July 30, 2013)

⁷ Demet Görünür, “Koruma Uygulama Sisteminin Türkiye ve Avrupa İçin Karşılaştırmalı Bir İncelemesi” (master’s thesis, Mimar Sinan University, 1994), 3.

⁸ Zeynep Ahunbay, *Tarihi Çevre Koruma ve Restorasyon: Korunacak Değerler ve Değerlendirme Ölçütleri*, 6th ed. (Istanbul: Yem Yayın, 2011), 27

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ Görünür, 4.

¹¹ Ibid.

The conservation of historic towns and other historic urban areas should be an integral part of coherent policies of economic and social development and of urban and regional planning at every level.

Qualities to be preserved include the historic character of the town or urban area and all those material and spiritual elements that express this character, especially:

Urban patterns as defined by lots and streets;

Relationships between buildings and green and open spaces;

The formal appearance, interior and exterior, of the buildings as defined by scale, size, style, construction, materials, colour and decoration;

The relationship between the town and urban area and its surrounding setting, both natural and man-made; and

The various functions that the town or urban area has acquired over time.

Any threat to these qualities would compromise the authenticity of the historic town or urban area.

The participation and the involvement of the residents are essential for the success of the conservation programme and should be encouraged. The conservation of historic town and urban areas concerns their residents first of all.

Conservation in a historic town or urban area demands prudence, a systematic approach and discipline. Rigidity should be avoided since individual cases may present specific problems.¹²

2.2. Evolution of Conservation and Conservation Problems in Turkey

Conservation of historic cities, individual monuments, and natural sites were taken into consideration in the late 19th century when European countries had already comprehended the significance of preservation of architectural and cultural values. This was introduced by Eugene Emmanuel Viollet le Duc who considered conservation act as a scientific discipline.

In the Ottoman period, the foundation of the conservation act was based on antiquities and in the Turkish Republic period, it reached European developed countries' standards in this field. The first law about the preservation of antiquities was Asar-ı Atika Nizamnamesi which came into force in 1869.¹³ In 1847, it was revised and as well as movable antiquities, it was decided to preserve monuments too.¹⁴ The term of antiquities which included only Greek and Roman remains was extended to a broader term that comprises monuments which have architectural, sculptural, artistic values like palaces, theatres, castles, bridges due to the third Asar-ı Atika Nizamnamesi in 1884.¹⁵ The thought of preserving Turkish-Islamic visual movable and immovable assets was accepted with the force of fourth Asar-ı Atika Nizamnamesi.¹⁶

After the Turkish Republic was founded in 19 May 1923, it had undergone a lot of changes in terms of industry, education, socio-economy and it was aimed to be a developed, modern country. Therefore, it was decided to focus on Turkish history, Turkish roots and culture by erasing the Ottoman impact and becoming honest with the origin of the Republic. In order to

¹² The Washington Charter, "Charter for the Conservation of Historic Towns and Urban Areas." (ICOMOS General Assembly, Washington, DC. October, 1987) <http://www.icomos.org/index.php/fr/chartes-et-normes/179-articles-en-francais/ressources/charters-and-standards/159-charter-for-the-conservation-of-historic-towns-and-urban-areas>(accessed July 30, 2013)

¹³ Görünür, 17.

¹⁴ Görünür, 18.

¹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶ Ibid.

make a noticeable progress in this path, conservation in Turkey became a significant aspect of this movement. In the 1950s, there were rapid changes in socio economic structure of Turkey which led to major problems in urban planning especially in Istanbul including the demolition of historic buildings, towns which brought out the question how to preserve our heritage for future generations. In Anatolian towns where there is less urban growth in comparison to the big cities like; Istanbul, Ankara, Izmir, the physical and social life of the historic town continues without any deterioration but in this respect, there is neither mentioning of a failure in conservation nor an achievement.¹⁷

2.3. Understanding of Conservation in Turkey

The most striking characteristic features of Bosphorous settlements are the green valleys, the yalis, woods, curving coastlines, promenades and low waterfronts and in the framework of the Istanbul Master Plan the Bosphorus Area was accepted as a “conservation site.”¹⁸ The most important conservation and planning processes for Bosphorus settlements include in chronological order:

1941, 1950, 1954- Village local development plan in the scale of 1/2000.¹⁹

1970- The first listing designation of the historic yalis of the Coastal zone.²⁰

¹⁷ Görünür, 10.

¹⁸ Ahsen Özsoy, Nuran Zeren, “Planning and Conservation in Istanbul Bosphorus Area: Opportunities and Challenges”, abstract, *Istanbul 30th RSA European Congress* (August 28-31, 1990):7.

¹⁹ Mimarlık Dergisi, “Büyük İstanbul Nazım Plan Çalışmaları 1971-1972” [Studies of the Greater Istanbul Master Plan Office 1971-1972], *Mimarlık Dergisi* 7, (1972): 110-118.

²⁰ SCIAM/ 5559 İstanbul Boğazıcı Sahil Seridi Yalıları Tescilli (Designation of Historic yalis in the Coastal Zone of the Bosphorus), October 10, 1970.

According to the distribution of the listed buildings to the township of the Bosphorus, in Besiktas there were 6 of the buildings in the first group, 31 in the second group and there was only one civil architecture example in the third group.²¹

1971- The Bosphorus area was first taken up as a planned conservation site with the Coastal Zone Conservation Plan in 1971 in the scale of 1/5000.²² This plan, however, comprised only the coastal strips on the Bosphorus and stipulated that the existing historic yalis and other historic buildings should be designated and taken under conservation, and that in the empty lots, only those buildings in harmony with the historic buildings of a maximum height of 9.50 metres would be allowed.²³

1973- With Act No 1710 of Antiquities coming into force, development activities in the Bosphorus area were directed according to the conservation decisions of the Supreme Council of Immovable Antiquities and Monuments. (SCIAM)²⁴

1977- The first master plan with the scale of 1/5000 comprising the whole of the Bosphorus area came into force on June 3rd, 1977, and was later revised in 1978 and in 1978 and in 1979.²⁵

1982- A new plan prepared according to some new principles was approved and brought into implementation in 1982.²⁶

²¹ SCIAM/ 6442 Istanbul Bogazici Sivil Mimarlik Ornekleri Tescilli (Designation of Historic Civil Architecture in the Bosphorus Area), May 13, 1972.

²² Mimarlık Dergisi, "Boğaziçi İmar Planı Raporu" [The report of the Bosphorus Development Plan], *Mimarlık Dergisi* 6, (1972): 29-30.

²³ Ibid..

²⁴ Eski Eserler Kanunu (Act for Antiquities, Official Gazette, No 14527/ 6.5.1973.

²⁵ SCIAM/ 8036 The 1/5000 scaled Listing, Designation and Conservation Decision of the Natural and Historic Sites of Bosphorus. April 12, 1975.

²⁶ Archives of the Greater Istanbul City Municipality

1983- The First Conservation Act concerning a special area was issued as the Bosphorus Act No 2960 came into force.²⁷ The Bosphorus Act No 2960 stipulated that the construction of new houses would be completely banned on the Coastal and the Forescene Zones, that only the historic listed buildings would be restored and that touristic and recreational facilities could be built; thus the 1983 plan completely lost its effectiveness especially in regard to creating new space for housing.²⁸

Act No 3194, Clause No 47 changed the principle “No planning alterations can be made in the present plan to increase population and/or building density” as “some planning alterations can be made in the present plan taking into consideration the population and the building density.”²⁹

With Provisional Clause No 7 of Act No 3194 it was stipulated that illegally constructed buildings and squatter settlements would be pardoned and accepted as legal and existing garret attics would be converted into full flats within the same height.³⁰

The Istanbul Branch of the Chamber of Architects applied to the First Administrative Court for the cancellation of the Master Plan with the scale of 1/5000 and its supplements, which had been prepared for the Backscene and Buffer Zones of the Bosphorus.³¹

1990- The First Administrative Court took a decision in April 1990 to stop the execution of this application for ninety days on the grounds that the Committee for the Conservation of

²⁷ 2960 Sayılı Bogazici Yasasi (The Bosphorus Act, No 2960), Official Gazette, November 22, 1983.

²⁸ Ahsen Özsoy, Nuran Zeren, “Planning and Conservation in Istanbul Bosphorus Area: Opportunities and Challenges”, abstract, *Istanbul 30th RSA European Congress* (August 28-31, 1990):7.

²⁹ Ibid.

³⁰ 3194 Sayılı İmar Kanunu, Geçici Madde (Construction Act, No 3194, Provisional Clause No 7), Official Gazette, May 9, 1985.

³¹ Archives of the Chamber of the Architects, “Bosphorus File,” Archives of the Chamber of the Architects, Istanbul.

Cultural and Natural Entities had not been consulted while preparing the plans for the Bosphorus, which has the statue of being a conservation site.³²

The implications of the changes in legislations led to contradictory planning decisions and their effects in addition to political and economic dynamics on Arnavutköy, caused disintegrated areas where the existing historic core become dominated by the newly developed plans. Current problems with rapid urban growth, the addition of bridges, transportation facilities and contradictory policies which influenced the conservation works and how they process in practice caused misconceptions in planning decisions. The main problem with legislations is that there are no stable policies that comprise of all the aspects of that area although after 1980s, urban planning laws have changed in order to reach the standards of the developed European countries.

However, there is no desirable urban conservation work which has been made in relation to the Arnavutköy neighbourhood and the consciousness in conservation of historic settlements was realized later than in other European countries. On site analyses showed that people in Arnavutköy are willing to conserve their neighbourhood which might be a step towards further feature conservation works and sustainability of the area.

2.4. Urban Conservation Projects in Istanbul

In Turkey, there are few planned, organized, conservation projects in urban planning which requires bigger scale and these types of organized urban conservation projects take place in areas where there is profit such as the conservation of Historic Peninsula in Istanbul and now it is a UNESCO site as seen in the figure 68. However, the historic neighbourhoods such as Fener- Balat districts had gone under urban transformation, rehabilitation projects in figure 1

³² Archives of the Chamber of the Architects, "Bosphorus File," Archives of the Chamber of the Architects, Istanbul.

and A.69. Zeyrek, Süleymaniye and Topkapı districts are also considered as urban conservation works in Istanbul.

There is a misconception concerning conservation in Turkey as it is realised that it is impossible to conserve buildings or sites which are not listed, and it leads self preservation of towns without any compatible intervention.

The definitions and their misunderstanding in Turkey cause problems in urban conservation works. Urban transformation, urban regeneration and renovation and urban rehabilitation works change the original character of the area and furthermore it gives a new identity to that authentic neighbourhood which belongs to a certain group of people who defines the character of the area. Therefore, the future development of the area depends on people who place a new identity on the original population of the neighbourhood. These inhabitants played a large role in defining the character of the area. It is not just about maintaining the physical structure but also spiritual meaning of the area.

The scope of the work which is planned to be done in Fener- Balat regions is described as urban rehabilitation and in terms of the urban rehabilitation plan, Kreuzberg neighbourhood in Germany was taken as an example for these regions. The physical state of the area resembles Arnavutköy as both had been damaged by the fires in the past. Greek and Jewish communities also had impact on these areas in the past and the richly ornamented facades from Ottoman times and mostly timber housing show the areas architectural features. The Greek community left the area and migrated to Arnavutköy, Kurucesme and other settlements along the Bosphorous.

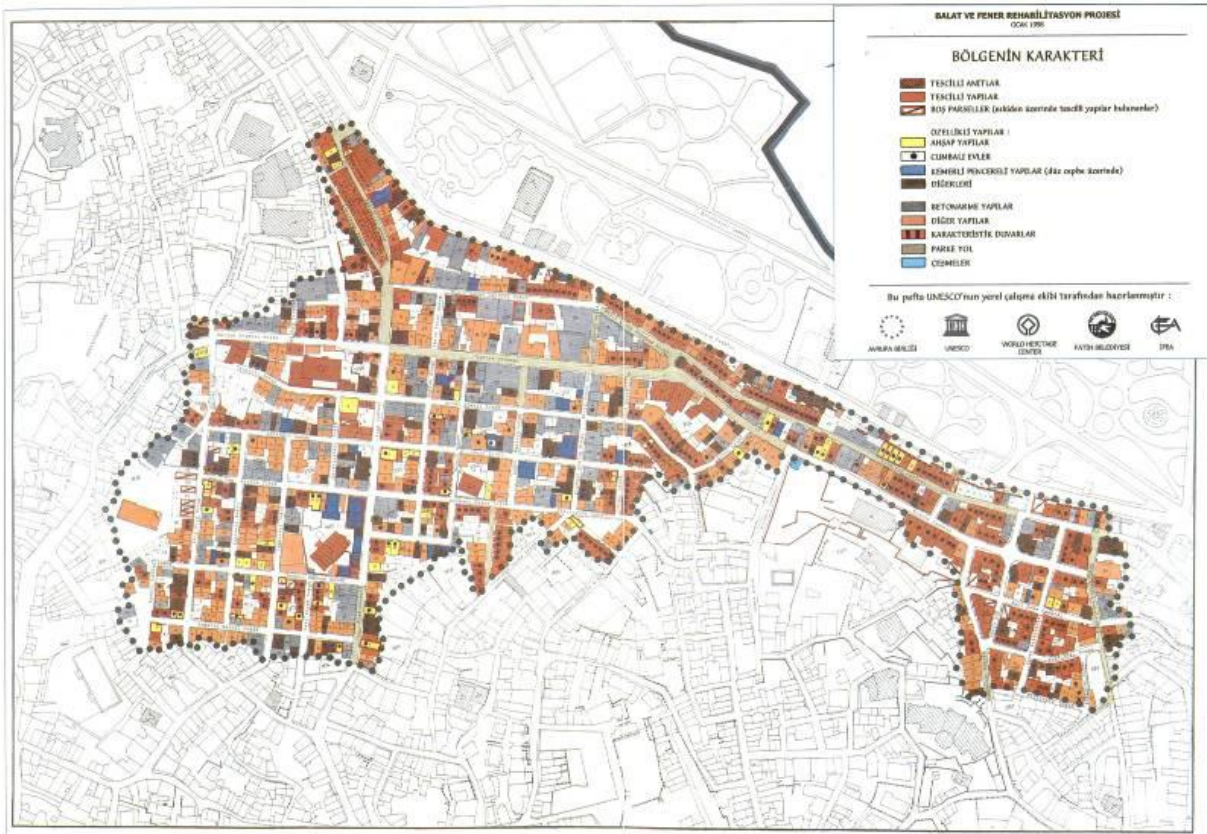


Figure 1: The Character of the Fener-Balat Area

2.5. Conservation in Arnavutköy and Its Rehabilitation

Ottoman authentic wooden houses in art nouveau style are the key characteristics of the area. Bosphorus was a summer resort in Ottoman period and these traditional houses with bay extensions are called “cumba” or cantilevered overhangs and they give a better view as well as reflecting the Ottoman housing pattern.

Ottoman era urban elements include street markets, fountains, hamam (bath), bazaar, city walls, water channels, passages, kahvehane (coffee houses) and squares. The Ottoman period urban aspects and architectural style of the buildings are the synthesis of Islamic and Turkish components and the notion of “neighbourhood” comes from that period. In the case of Arnavutköy, there is a mentioning of social differentiation with Greek and Jewish population and its effect on space perception. The Greek community’s physical urban components on the

district were Orthodox Greek churches, ayazma, taverns. (Greek restaurants with mediterranean music) Differentiated only by religion, sharing culture, customs and the property, the unique specialty of this neighbourhood is that it is not only a Turkish or Greek or Jewish quarter, it is an Ottoman era quarter that embraces both the majority and minorities regardless their beliefs, cultures, or languages. Even after the departure of Greeks and Jews, people in Arnavutköy still carry out their customs and preserve the relationship between the community dwellers as it was in the past. One of the responsibilities of the population is to conserve tangible cultural legacy of this mixed community and the areas intangible values. In Arnavutköy, in recent years, there have been rehabilitation works of listed structures rather than urban conservation works.



Figure 2: *Above left*, a house before a restoration project in Arnavutköy; *above right*, after the restoration project

In figure 2, there is a restoration work of II. Listed building which is located on the Beyazgül-Karakavak Street.

It is observed on this site that although the original structure was recorded, the new building does not follow the existing material, form, color or texture and hence it does not become more than imitation.

The perception of restoration, results in application of these types of works which erase the memory of the area.

İstanbul Metropolitan Municipality Bosphorus Planning Authority.

Property owner: T. Saral- K. Özkaplan

Architectural Project: MP Tasarım ve Uygulama LTD. ŞTİ.

Y. Mimar (İTÜ) Mustafa Pehlivanoğlu

Certificate of Approval date/ number: 23.06.2010/47



Figure 3: Restitution Project in Arnavutköy

In figure 3, İstanbul Metropolitan Municipality Bosphorus Planning Authority carries out restitution project of II. Listed building which is located on the Beyazgül- Karakavak street.

Property owner: Defne Bozkurt

Architectural Project: Feyman İnkaya Takaoğlu/ Architect

Static Project: Erol Yümlü/ Civil Engineer

Mechanic Project: ořkun zbařı/ Mechanic Engineer

Electric Project: Erdoęan Kırıcı/ Electric Engineer

Certificate of Approval date/ number: 13.09.2012/ 000124-12



Figure 4: Restoration of II. Listed Building

In figure 4, II. Listed building restoration project in practice shows how restoration is perceived in Istanbul.

İstanbul Metropolitan Municipality Bosphorus Planning Authority

Property Owner: Ayře Feyhan İnkaya

Building Location: Beyazgöl street

Building Type: II. Listed Group

Architectural Project: A. Feyhan İnkaya/ Master Architect Restorator

Static Project: Metin Köksaldı/ Civil engineer

Mechanic Project: M. Kaplan Şahin/ Mechanic Engineer

Electric Project: Mustafa Aydın/ Electric Engineer

Certificate of Approval date/ number: 29.04.2005/ 8504

Yalı Restoration in Arnavutköy

There are first, second and third group of listed buildings and according to the laws, Gayrimenkul Eski Eserler ve Anıtlar Yüksek Kurulu (SCIAM) 14.1.1978 dated and with act no 10200, in II. Group of listed building, only the facades must be preserved. This legislation caused some problems in applications.³³

First of all, it erases original character of the building and after it is restored, it becomes non-genuine imitation of the historic building.

³³ Sinan Genim, “İkinci Grup Uygulama Örnekleri,” *Mimarlık Dergisi* 3-4, (1984): 31-35.

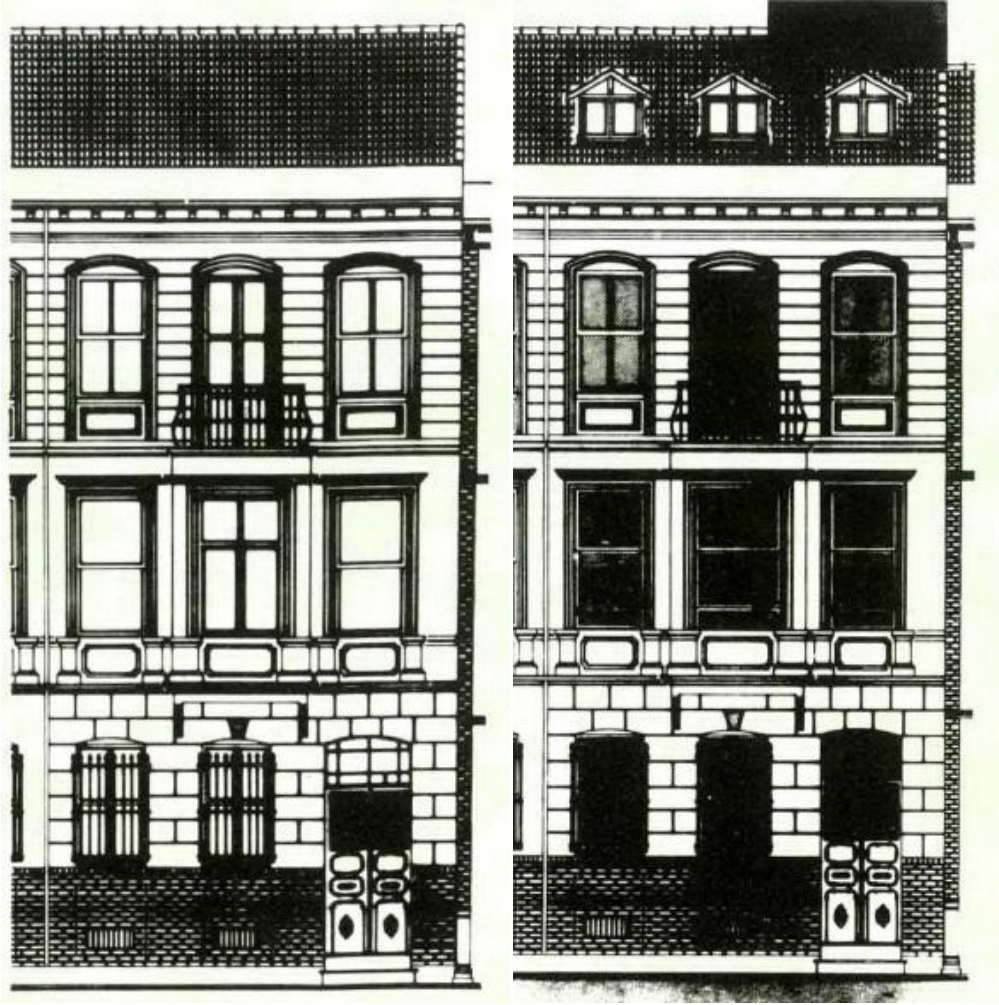


Figure 5: Rear facade of a yali in Arnavutköy and its view before and after the restoration

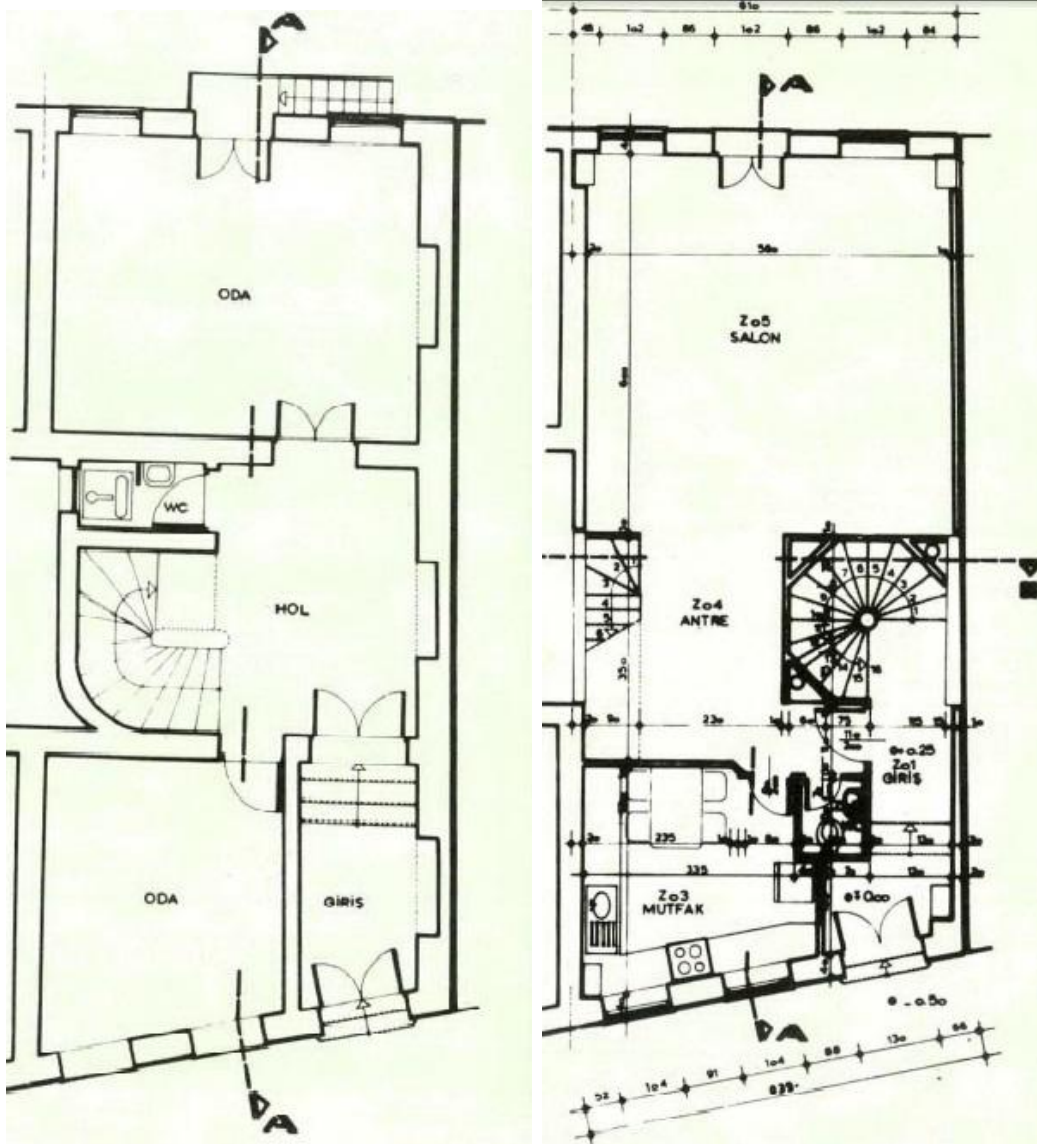


Figure 6: Plans before and after restoration

The entrance is narrowed due to the addition of stairs across the entrance door in the figure 6 and the room which is next to entrance lobby is converted to a kitchen and this creates a corridor that opens up to a hall. The rear room was expanded by removing the toilet and the partition wall and it becomes a living room. Although the facade view does not display the differences, in the planning scheme there are some changes. Furthermore, in the figure 5, on the facade, there is an additional storey on the top floor with three windows which is the reason why the height of the storeys changed.



Figure 7: An old building which was damaged from the fires in Arnavutköy

There is no action has taken place for buildings that were damaged in the fires as seen in figure 7, the building barely survives. Two adjoining buildings on Beyazgül Street are in need of restoration especially in this area where commercial activities take place.



Figure 8: A view from Eglence street

Private house owners in the area are responsible from maintenance of these historic buildings that are neglected as in the figure 8.



Figure 9: *Above left*, a house across the Bosphorus Sports Club on the Kirechane Street; *right*, a listed ruin, which is located on the Beyazgül- Tayyar Suphi Street

The abandoned buildings barely survive in today's modern lifestyle and that is why people prefer to live in newly built 4 or more storey houses and for this reason, these buildings are left to decay mostly as seen in the figure 9.



Figure 10: Sekbanlar street view

There are still some streets remain intact with their architectural features, functions, texture and historic neighbourhood as in the figure 10.

3. Case Study

3.1. Setting



Figure 11: Istanbul's Aerial Map in scale of 1/500000

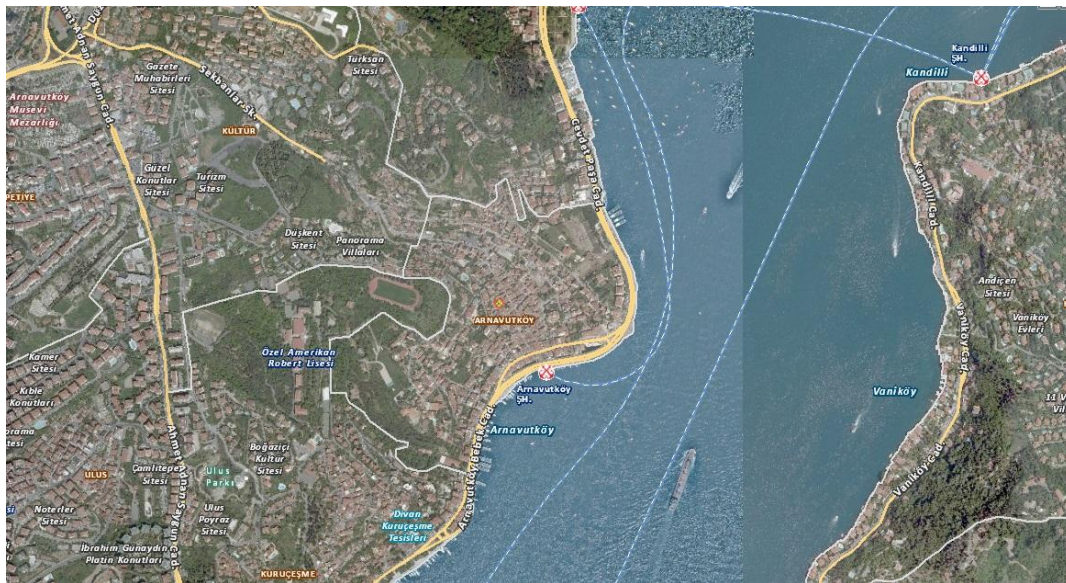


Figure 12: Arnavutköy's location in the scale of 1.5000 Aerial Map

Istanbul is one of the 85 provinces in Turkey and it is divided into two continents; Europe and Asia.

The oldest settlement in European side was Byzantion and on the Asian side it was Kalkedon. After the Roman period this city had been ruled by the Byzantium and Ottoman Emperors. It became the most important city with its population, location, economical, social, cultural status in Turkey. Its history dates 400000 years back to ancient times and the city which had been the capital of many civilizations lost its importance in the Turkish Republic period when Ankara was declared as the capital of this new born country. Istanbul has 14 neighbourhoods in Asian side, 25 neighbourhoods in European side; in total, it has 39 neighbourhoods.

Designated Sites in Istanbul

Archaeological Designated Sites: 50

Urban Designated Sites: 16

Historic Designated Sites: 5

Other Designated Sites

Archaeological and Natural Designated Sites: 9

Historic and Urban Designated Sites: 4

Historic and Natural Designated Sites: 4

Natural and Urban Designated Sites: 3

Archaeological and Historic Designated Sites: 2

Archaeological and Urban Designated Site: 1

Natural-Urban- Historic Designated Site: 1

Total : 96³⁴

One of the oldest neighbourhoods in Istanbul, Besiktas is located along Rumeli shore of Bosphorous. Coastal neighbourhoods in European side are Ortaköy, Kuruçeşme, Arnavutköy “in figure 12”, Bebek, Rumelihisarı, Baltalimanı, Emirgan, İstinye, Yeniköy, Tarabya, Kireçburnu, Büyükdere and Sarıyer.

Arnavutköy is one of the oldest settlements in Besiktas in Istanbul and it is shown in the figure 15. Istanbul is a cross continental city which links European side to Asian side.

Arnavutköy is located on European side of Bosphorous coast, in between Kurucesme and Bebek.

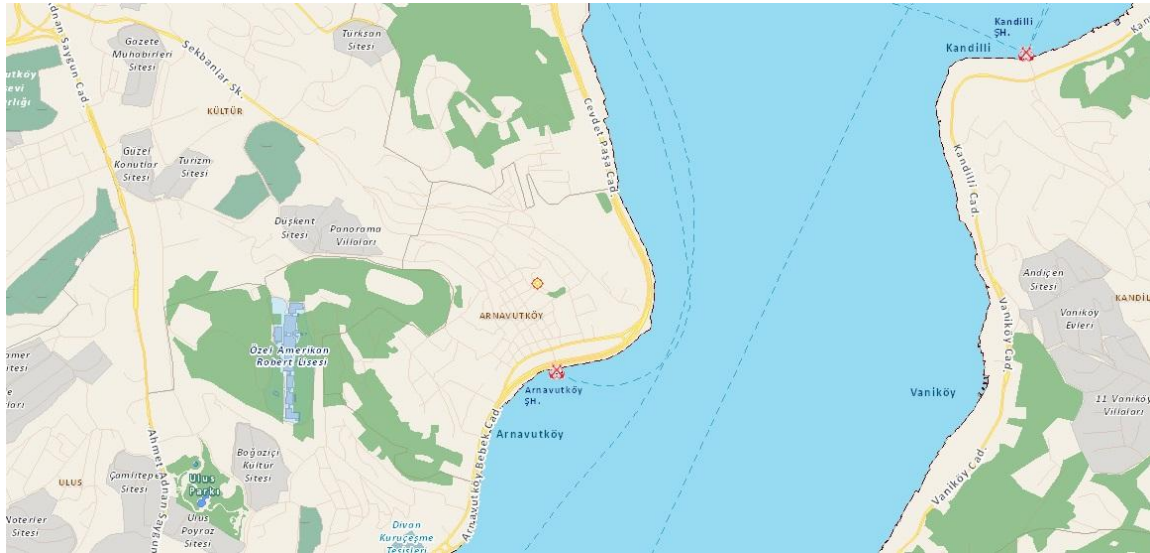


Figure 13: Halihazır harita, Arnavutköy in the scale of 1/5000

³⁴ T.C. Kültür ve Turizm Bakanlığı Kültür Varlıkları ve Müzeler Genel Müdürlüğü, “İllere Göre Korunması Gerekli Taşınmaz Kültür Varlığı İstatistiği,” <http://www.kulturvarliklari.gov.tr/> (accessed July 30, 2013).

3.1.1. Archeology



Figure 14: Archeological map of Arnavutköy



Figure 15: Halil Paşa Yalısı

It is only listed archeological ruin in Arnavutköy and it has layers of Medieval/ Byzantium- Anatolian Seljuk Empires.³⁵ It is in a bad state.³⁶ Among the findings, there is a piece from a

³⁵ İstanbul İl Turizm ve Kültür Turizm Müdürlüğü, “Arkeoloji Envanteri,” İstanbul Kültür Mirası ve Ekonomisi Envanteri, http://www.istanbulkulturenvanteri.gov.tr/arkeolojik-kultur/detay/envanter_id/2397 (accessed June 20, 2013).

³⁶ Ibid.

Corinthian column heading that has monogram on it.³⁷ There is also a Corinthian column heading and a marble entablement.³⁸

3.1.2. Geology

Most of the area in Besiktas boundaries comprises of rocks from the period (Paleozik) dependent on devoniyen system.³⁹ It is also stated that this formation featuring argillaceous schist, grovak has changed in second period Mesozoik, to folding and grew taller and cracks were filled with magma in result of volcanic movements.⁴⁰ It is added that there are no clues from the formations in Besiktas from the third period (Senezoik).⁴¹ In coastal areas, especially where rivers formed and where rivers meet with sea, there is formation of alluvion.⁴²

3.1.3. Topography



Figure 16: From Arnavutköy to Rumelihisarı, 1895

³⁷ Ibid.

³⁸ Ibid.

³⁹ Nuri Akbayar, ed., *Dünden Bugüne Beşiktaş: Doğal Yapı* (İstanbul: Beşiktaş Belediye Başkanlığı, 1998), 7-10.

⁴⁰ Ibid.

⁴¹ Ibid.

⁴² Ibid.

Landform

In Besiktas, landforms are divided into two. The first landform is the coastal area of Istanbul Bosphorous, the second one is the inland. Coastal areas are formed with hillsides that are parallel to the sea. Some of these slopes were divided with the valleys that became stream bed.⁴³ Besiktas coast of Bosphorous is not very wavy. In Ortaköy, Deferburnu; in Arnavutköy, Akıntıburnu are the capes on the coast of Bosphorous. The only bay in Besiktas is Bebek bay. The only island in Besiktas boundaries is Kurucesme Island.

Rivers

In Besiktas, today there are no rivers except the river with three branches which formed from Nispetiye neighbourhood valley and this marks the boundaries of Ortaköy and Levazım and it flows under the vault before coming to Ambarlıdere Dereiçi Street.⁴⁴ A few of other rivers disappeared with the settlements at the end of 19th century and a few of them disappeared in the result of the changes in the topography.⁴⁵ Today, some of the rivers have got the street names in Besiktas: Karabali (Dolmabahce) River, Besiktas River (overflows in 1811 and 1866 caused great damages), Muradiye River, Fulya River, Fulya River, Ihlamur River, Hasanpaşa River, Yahyaefendi River, Ortaköy River (Flowing from Dereboyu Street, meet with the sea in the north of Ortaköy mosque) Ekmekçioğlu River, Arnavutköy River⁴⁶.

Groves (Koru) in Arnavutköy:

Arnavutköy Robert Kolej Korusu: It is located on the land with perpendicular angle that comprises of hills, slopes, valleys that face to northeast and southeast, get higher from the

⁴³ Nuri Akbayer, ed., *Dünden Bugüne Beşiktaş: Doğal Yapı* (İstanbul: Beşiktaş Belediye Başkanlığı, 1998), 7-10.

⁴⁴ Ibid.

⁴⁵ Ibid.

⁴⁶ Akbayer, ed., 10-13.

Arnavutköy coast to Ulus. It is 27.5 hectare.⁴⁷ There are Magnolia, Fraxinus Excelsior, Limetree, Sycamore, Pedunculate Oak, Cercis Siliguastrum, Locust, Prunus Laurocerasus, Phllyrea, Kermes Oak, Cedrus Libani, Cupressus, Stone Pine, Acer Tree, Walnut, Tree of Heaven, Laurus, Mastic, Koelreutaria, Nettle Tree and it comprises of many other various natural, egzotic trees and bushes.⁴⁸ Recently, built dining hall, indoor sports hall and theatres caused clearcutting or getting dry of leaves trees like Deodar Cedar, Silver Linden.⁴⁹

İpar Korusu: Located in between Arnavutköy-Bebek, it is a land with perpendicular angle, it gets higher from the coast to southwest. This area with some buildings and walls from Byzantium period, is 4.4 hectar.⁵⁰ The entrance to koru is from Etiler with a big gate. Silver Linden, Fraxinus Excelsior, Nettle Tree, Aesculus Hippocastanum, Acer Tree, Laurus, Cercis Siliguastrum, Cupressus, Stone Pine, Taxus Baccata, Sexuoia Sempevirens, Ulmus Glabra, Sycamore, Magnolia Grandiflora are among the species.⁵¹ Today, koru belongs to Emin Hattat family.

Kortel Korusu: In between Arnavutköy and Bebek, it is getting higher from the coast to the southwest, very steep, hilly terrain. Koru's surface measure is approximately 2 hectar.⁵² Koru and the burned 2 timber köşk in it, belongs to the daughter of Kavalalı Mehmed Ali Paşa, Zeynep Hanım. Approximately 20 houses with one or two floors and köşk were built in between 1978 and 1984 on the plain terrain which is close to crest of koru.⁵³ The tree species

⁴⁷ Akbayer, ed., 10-13.

⁴⁸ Ibid.

⁴⁹ Ibid.

⁵⁰ Ibid.

⁵¹ Ibid.

⁵² Ibid.

⁵³ Ibid.

reached monumental sizes; Stone Pine, Pinus Brutia, Cupressus, Mastic, Pedunculate Oak, Cercis Siliguastrum, Laurus, Mavi Atlas trees.⁵⁴

3.2. History

3.2.1. General History

Ancient Times

In ancient times, Arnavutköy was known as “Hestai” because of the lime quarries on the hills.⁵⁵ It is also mentioned that the local people of this village were Greeks who came here from Megara and Argos to found colonies.⁵⁶ Greek population who believed in polytheistic religion had a sanctuary in this area.⁵⁷

Roman Times

In Roman times, when Konsül Promotos settled in the area, it had first got the name “Promotu,” then “Anaplous.”⁵⁸ After the people of the village accepted Christianity as their religion, the Ayios Mikhailaion Church was founded and the name of this place was changed to “Mikhailaion.”⁵⁹ In Latin invasion, after this church got plundered, the sanctuary stones were used in building Rumeli Hisarı.⁶⁰ In this church which was presumably built by Konstantinos, the icon of Archangel Mihael mosaic was hidden.⁶¹ After building many churches in different sizes and because of the existence of Ayios Mihael Church, it was

⁵⁴ Ibid.

⁵⁵ Saffet Emre Tonguç and Pat Yale, *İstanbul Hakkında Herşey: Arnavutköy* (İstanbul: Boyut, 2010), 422

⁵⁶ Aras Neftçi, Birsan Babacan, and S. Faruk Göncüoğlu, *İstanbul'un Semtleri: Arnavutköy* (İstanbul: İstanbul Büyükşehir Belediyesi, 2003), 5

⁵⁷ Ibid.

⁵⁸ Ibid.

⁵⁹ Ibid.

⁶⁰ Neftçi, Babacan, and Göncüoğlu, 7

⁶¹ Nuri Akbayer, ed., *Dünden Bugüne Beşiktaş: Semtlerin Tarihi* (İstanbul: Beşiktaş Belediye Başkanlığı, 1998), 35

named as Angels Village.⁶² In the sources where it was named as Mihaleion, it mentions that it was located in between Arnavutköy and Akıntıburnu where the stream in Bosphorus is the most powerful, that is coming from Black Sea to Marmara Sea.⁶³ In the following year, it was known as “Horasmoto” which means “Village of Angels.”⁶⁴

After the conquest of Istanbul, Romans named the town as “Asomaton” and in time it has changed to “Megalu Revmatos” (Büyük Akıntı) known as grand flow.⁶⁵ Mega Revma people roots come from coastal towns of Marmara; Silivri, Tirilye, Mudanya and Greek islands; Milos, Andros, Tinos, Naksos, Paros, Sakız in Aegean sea and fishermen who had hardship to sail from Akıntıburnu called it “Diabolique Revma”, *Şeytan Akıntısı* or *Devil flow*.⁶⁶

Byzantium Times

In the Byzantium period (4th century-15th century) today’s Beşiktaş coast was known with its three important structures: Ayios Mihael church in “Anapulus” (against the stream), summer residence of emperors, Ayios Mamas palace complex and Fokas monastery.⁶⁷ The church was repaired in I. İustinianos period (527-565) and it existed until 10th century with its octagonal dome which resembles the dome of small Hagia Sophia.⁶⁸

⁶² Ibid.

⁶³ Ibid.

⁶⁴ Saffet Emre Tonguç and Pat Yale, *İstanbul Hakkında Herşey: Arnavutköy* (Istanbul: Boyut, 2010), 422

⁶⁵ Neftçi, Babacan, and Gönçüoğlu, 7

⁶⁶ Ibid.

⁶⁷ Nuri Akbayer, ed., *Dünden Bugüne Beşiktaş: Semtlerin Tarihi* (Istanbul: Beşiktaş Belediye Başkanlığı, 1998),

14

⁶⁸ Ibid.

Ottoman Empire

In Ottoman period, Arnavutköy was known as Megali Revmatu (Great Current) which was named by Greeks who were living in the area.⁶⁹ Arnavutköy was administratively dependent to Galata in Ottoman period. Arnavutköy has got its today's name in the XIX. century from Arnavut cobblestone craftsmen whom were brought by Sultan Abdülmecid. After Fatih Sultan Mehmet conquered Arnavutluk and Epir, it is presumed that it was called Arnavutköy when the villagers brought from these places to this village and it is known that the first Arnavut community was settled in this neglected, ruined village in 1468.⁷⁰ In 1540s, Petrus Gyllius who came to Istanbul does not mention the name of Arnavutköy when he wrote that the area was covered with vineyards.⁷¹

In an enactment which was sent to Bostancıbaşı: "Bostancıbaşı'ya hüküm ki Arnavutköy bağları Hassa-i Hümayun için koru iken bazı kimseler anda şıkar ettikleri işitilmiştir." which claims that people are not allowed to hunt in this area.⁷² It is presumed that the name of Arnavutköy was mentioned in this period. It states that even after Arnavut villagers left this place, its name was preserved. According to one notion, these people believed in Orthodox Christianity and later they became "Rum."⁷³ In the 16th century, one of the well known recreation areas with its yards, gardens and breeze and Arnavutköy became a settlement for Greeks and Jews until 19th century.

⁶⁹ Akbayan, ed., 35

⁷⁰ Neftçi, Babacan, and Göncüoğlu, 7

⁷¹ Akbayan, ed., 35

⁷² Neftçi, Babacan, and Göncüoğlu, 7

⁷³ Ibid.

Completed in 1768, Hadikatü'l-cevami, mentions about Arnavutköy that because there were no mosque and mescid, they went to Bebek to pray: “Kariye-i mezburede cami ve mescid olmadığından Bebeğe geçilmiştir.”⁷⁴

After the fires in 1887, most of the Jewish villagers left the village and afterwards Turkish people settled there.⁷⁵ When the Turkish people were at wars, borders under the gunfire, minority groups were living in welfare because they were exempted from military service.⁷⁶

After II. Mahmud found out that rich Greeks supported the Mora rebellion, he took over the residences from them and gave them to Jewish families.⁷⁷ It can be said that the Jewish were living in the area from 1654s. After their houses, synagogues were burned down in 1887 fire, Jewish people left the town and they settled in Ortaköy, Balat, Kuzguncuk where the Jew population was higher.⁷⁸

In 1908, until the declaration of II. Meşrutiyet (Ottoman law known as second constitutional period), Mega Revma people were handling their administration with the help of economic support of rich people and the church committee and if it was an important issue which concerned to all of the people, they would have to inform Galata administration and Bostancıbaşı.⁷⁹ In the period of the emperor II. Mahmud, after the administration system has changed to “muhtarlık,” “muhtar” who is responsible from administration of that village, was designated.⁸⁰ In that period, because the majority of the villagers were Greeks, “muhtar” (administrator) was chosen among them.

⁷⁴ Akbayer, ed., 35

⁷⁵ Neftçi, Babacan, and Göncüoğlu, 7

⁷⁶ Ibid.

⁷⁷ Aras Neftçi, Babacan, and Göncüoğlu, 9

⁷⁸ Ibid.

⁷⁹ Ibid.

⁸⁰ Ibid.

Turkish Republic

Armenian primary school was closed due to the decrease in minority population in 1930s. In 29th of September 1923, when the Turkish Republic was founded, Besiktas was a part of Beyoglu side of the town. In terms of administration, it was dependent on the Beyoğlu lieutenant governor. However, Istanbul was no longer the capital city of Turkish Republic anymore and instead Ankara has become the capital city of this new born country.

Besiktas was one of the most changing, growing towns in Istanbul. First, annulling the caliphate in 3rd of March 1924 saw abandoned yalılar, houses along the shore from Besiktas to Arnavutköy, after members of Ottoman dynasty were forced to leave the country and ownership of some of these houses were given to the public communities, some were used as storage, school and some were demolished.⁸¹

The characteristic change of Besiktas started in the period of Lütü Kırdar's mayorship (8 December 1938- 24 November 1949). Lütü Kırdar has confirmed a wide range master urban development plan which was designed by French urban planner H. Prost and it was verified by the government's city planning department. The opening of boulevards, formation of squares, broadening existing roads and rehabilitating, reorganization of green areas, formation of recreational areas, increasing the quantitative and qualification of municipality services; water supply, electricity, transportation and giving the town monumental buildings that would be a symbol of Republic, can be summed up with its basic principles.⁸²

⁸¹ Nuri Akbayar, ed., *Dünden Bugüne Beşiktaş: Tarih İçinde Beşiktaş* (Istanbul: Beşiktaş Belediye Başkanlığı, 1998), 25

⁸² Ibid.

3.2.2. The People of Arnavutköy

The layers of social structure of the Arnavutköy neighbourhood include Greeks, Jewish people, Armenians and Muslims which define unique characteristics of the settlement. This study took place in three different settlements which differentiate among themselves; coastal areas, inland, hills. Each area whether it is in shoreline or inland area has its own particular architectural, historic built fabric.

Evliya Çelebi claims that in the middle of 17th century in the near coastal areas of the village, there were 1000 households that were with vineyards and gardens belong to Greeks and Jews; there were no mosques, mescit nor imaret but there was a small hamam and wrote:

“Ekmeğinin ve peksimedinin beyaz, Yahudilerinin sahib-i zevk ve ehl-i saz, Rum Hristiyanlarının kavm-i laz, cemaat-i müslimin gayet az”.⁸³ This proves that the muslim population was lower than Jews and Greek Christians who lived there and majority of the population of Jews and Christians lived in prosperity.

In III Selim period (1790s) a bostancıbaşı (gardener) wrote in his notes that counting the buildings from Kurucesme to Akıntıburnu and it is realized that the only Turkish yalı was belong to “Sultan Hanım” but the others were belong to rich families from Byzantium dynasty and Greeks who earned money by translating sources.⁸⁴ Population in Besiktas in 1930s was around 50 thousand. In 1980, it increased to 190 thousand.⁸⁵ In 50 years there was 4 times growth in population.⁸⁶ Today, it is presumed that it is over 250 thousand.⁸⁷

⁸³ Akbayer, ed., 35

⁸⁴ Ibid.

⁸⁵ Akbayer, ed., 29

⁸⁶ Ibid.

⁸⁷ Ibid.

Today's Arnavutköy Neighbourhood has:

Street number: 67

Building number: 1216

Household number: 2759

Women: 1962

Men: 1706

In total: 3668

Age distribution:	0-6	7-11	12-18	19-25	26-35	36-50	Above 51
Women:	162	75	135	176	356	419	732
Men:	74	90	123	198	276	383	562

Figure 17: Population chart in Arnavutköy

There are shops to cater for every need from wool fluffer to bakery, jeweller to greengrocer, butcher to hairdresser, herbalist, ironmonger, bankers and chemists.⁸⁸ The residents are determined to protect their tradesmen from the competition of supermarkets.⁸⁹

⁸⁸ Tülay Taşcıoğlu, "A Serene Village on the Bosphorus," *Istanbul City Magazine*, May 2007, 153

⁸⁹ Ibid.

There are daily open public markets every Tuesday which is one of the traditional shopping habits of Arnavutköy people.

The ceremony of casting a cross into the sea was held in Arnavutköy on January sixth. It symbolized the baptism of Jesus and was believed to bring prosperity to the villages.⁹⁰ A wooden cross was cast into the sea and youths jumped into the sea to retrieve the cross.⁹¹ Although the cross was tied with rope so as not to be swallowed by waves bringing bad luck, it took courage and skill to retrieve it from that cold, strong current.⁹²

Arnavutköy Fires

The first of a series of fires in Arnavutköy was in 1797, in the morning with the effect of the severe southwest wind, whole village was destroyed and among burnt down buildings, there were Biniş köşk, the Sadrazam's yalı, well known Hasan Halife Yalı and the most beautiful yalı of that period; Mektupçu İbrahim Efendi Yalı.⁹³

It is reported that after the village was reconstructed, in 1883 fire, eight buildings were burnt down and in 1908 fire, 109 buildings were burnt down.⁹⁴ The most of the buildings that burnt down belong to Rum and 800 families stayed out.⁹⁵ Moreover, approximately 40 buildings, one school and a Jewish synagogue were burnt down.⁹⁶

⁹⁰ Taşcıoğlu, 155

⁹¹ Ibid.

⁹² Ibid.

⁹³ Aras Neftçi, Birsen Babacan, and S. Faruk Göncüoğlu, *İstanbul'un Semtleri: Arnavutköy* (İstanbul: İstanbul Büyükşehir Belediyesi, 2003), 11

⁹⁴ Ibid.

⁹⁵ Ibid.

⁹⁶ Ibid.

3.3. Area Analysis

Conservation planning in the area could be successful by achieving the interaction of three essential aspects; physical, social, economic status of the area. Urban development in Turkey had major effects on planning including the historic neighbourhoods and its outcomes on conservation planning in Arnavutköy. Arnavutköy is one of the neighbourhoods that have preserved its vernacular structure in Bosphorous which lost its nature-construction balance in the way of urbanism from 1950s to today.⁹⁷

It is clearly observed that most of the coastal buildings that have vernacular architectural features, have evolved throughout time and they lost their original physical characters after the later renovations and restorations; however these coastal structures are the representation of Art Nouveau style which is embroidered to timber structures and in that changing process Arnavutköy has been surviving even though there are serious conservation problems in the area.

⁹⁷ Zeynep Nayır, “Arnavutköy’ün Tarihi Çevre Özellikleri,” *Metu Journal of The Faculty of Architecture* 4, no. 2 (December 1978): 159-177.

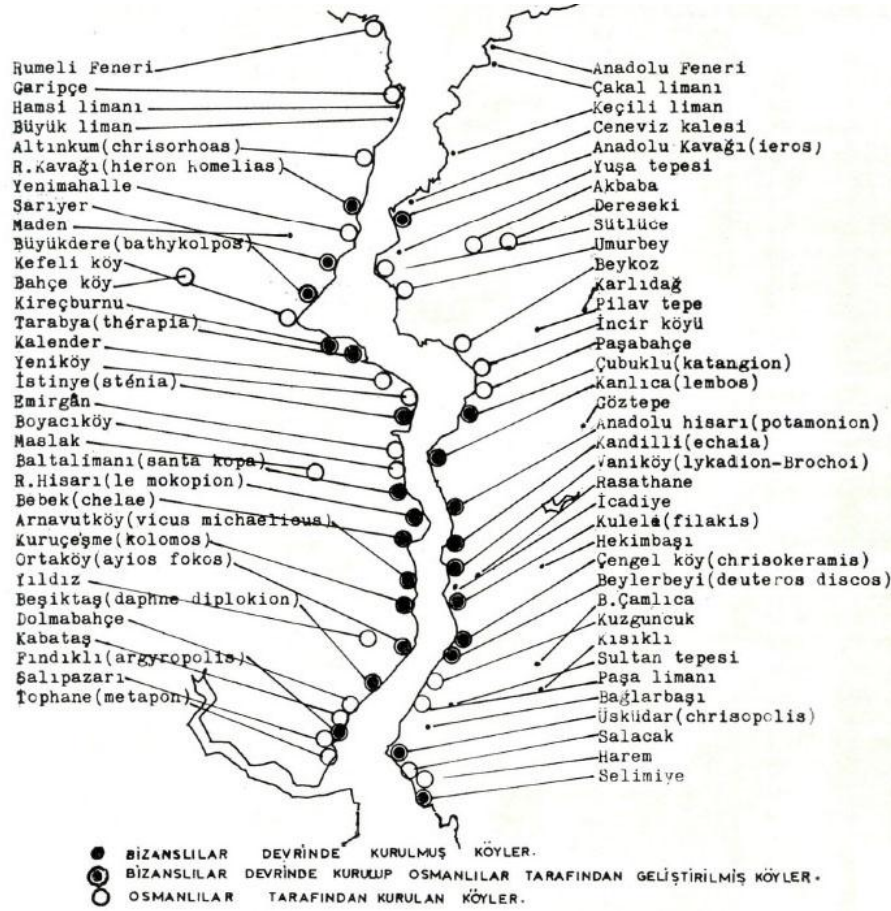


Figure 18: Boğaziçi'nde İskan Gelişmesi- The evaluation of Bosphorus settlements

As it is shown in the Figure 19, Arnavutköy is a village which dates back to Byzantium period.

Villages in Byzantium period

Villages which were founded in Byzantium period but developed in Ottoman period

Villages that were founded by Ottomans



Figure 19: Boğaziçi Milli Parkı Zonları- Bosphorus National Park Zones

2. Living Zone

“This living zone must be conserved with its landscape, villages which have authentic characters of their own and this conservation project must be applied to Bosphorus settlements”⁹⁸ as it is indicated in the map, Arnavutköy is included in the living zone. The precautions for conservation (building height limitation, construction material selection and its colour, form and style etc.) are necessary for this zone.⁹⁹

This project should include urban, landscape, architectural, archeological, historic sites as well as other elements in both sides of Bosphorus.¹⁰⁰

⁹⁸ Mehmet Çubuk, “Boğaziçi Mekanı ve Tanzimi Sorunu,” Mimarlık Dergisi, no. 5 (1968): 25-26.

⁹⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰⁰ Ibid.

3.3.1. Mapping Analysis



Figure 20: Case study area

The case study area as is shown in the figure 21, there are small plots where buildings become attached to one another. The density of buildings with narrow facades is observed alongside the Bosphorus and also through the Beyazgül Street which becomes linear and almost perpendicular to the coast and ends with an open space. Beyazgül Street is surrounded by row houses that have 3 or more storey and these structures with bay windows that overshadow the street. Car parking on the both sides of these narrow streets is concluded with the occupation of pedestrian way. The parallel streets to Beyazgül Street connect to the Kuruceme Street which is back street of Bebek- Arnavutköy Street and the rear facade of “yalı” s face with Kuruceme Street. The park lost its meaning because of the high density of commercial and residential surrounding areas. Additionally, the traffic flow on the main street, Bebek- Arnavutköy Street interrupts the facade view of coastal settlements and the social facility

which is located in front of the other historically significant buildings, Arnavutköy Police Station and Tevfikiye Mosque cause density, visual disruption.

The arrangements of the plots leave some gaps which sometimes become green spaces and sometimes become a dead end. Where the altitude is increased, there are stepped streets which lead to entrances of 3 or less storey houses on different levels so that the views of the houses are not visually interrupted.

These illegally built structures occurred due to the rapid urbanization in 1960s and are differentiated by the coastal structures in terms of story height, stepped organization, having green spaces, gardens, irregular planning pattern with less density of buildings, and having spaces in between the houses.

The silhouette of the area is dominated by the Taksiarhis church which was the highest church in the period when it was built but nowadays, it loses its dominated view because of the rapid increase in height of the surrounding buildings with the demand in modernization. The silhouette of Arnavutköy is determined by the roof tiles of the buildings.



Figure 21: Plan de Constantinople



Figure 22: A Map of The Thracian Bosphorus or Canal of Constantinople

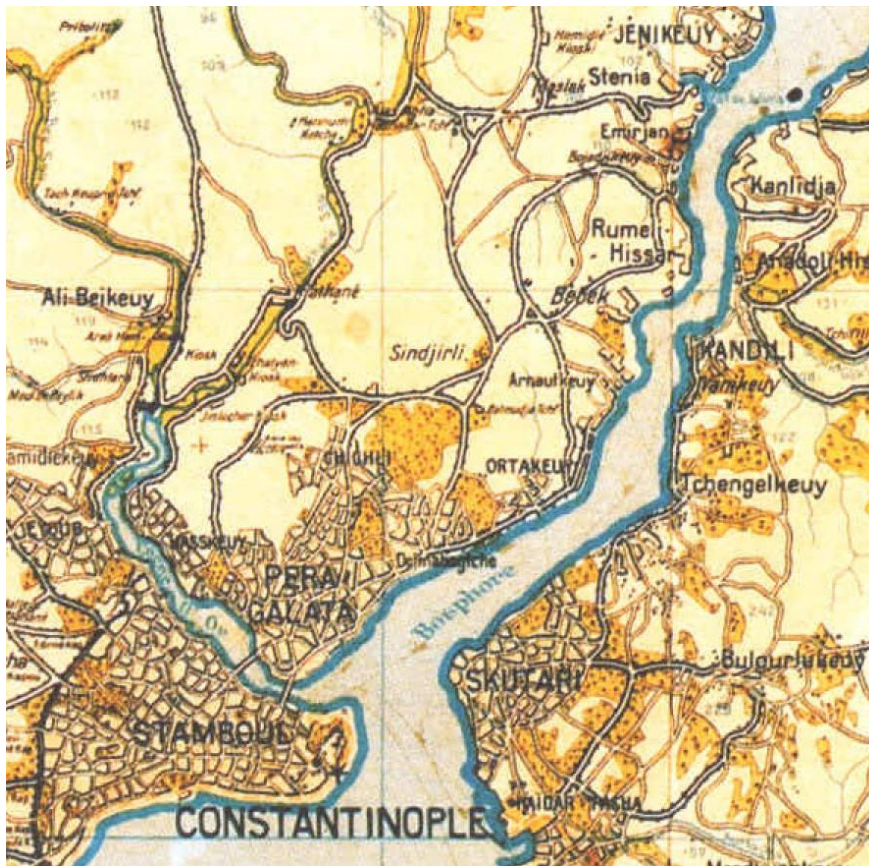


Figure 25: Carte Generale Des Environs De Constantinople



Figure 26: Map of Arnavutköy in 1926

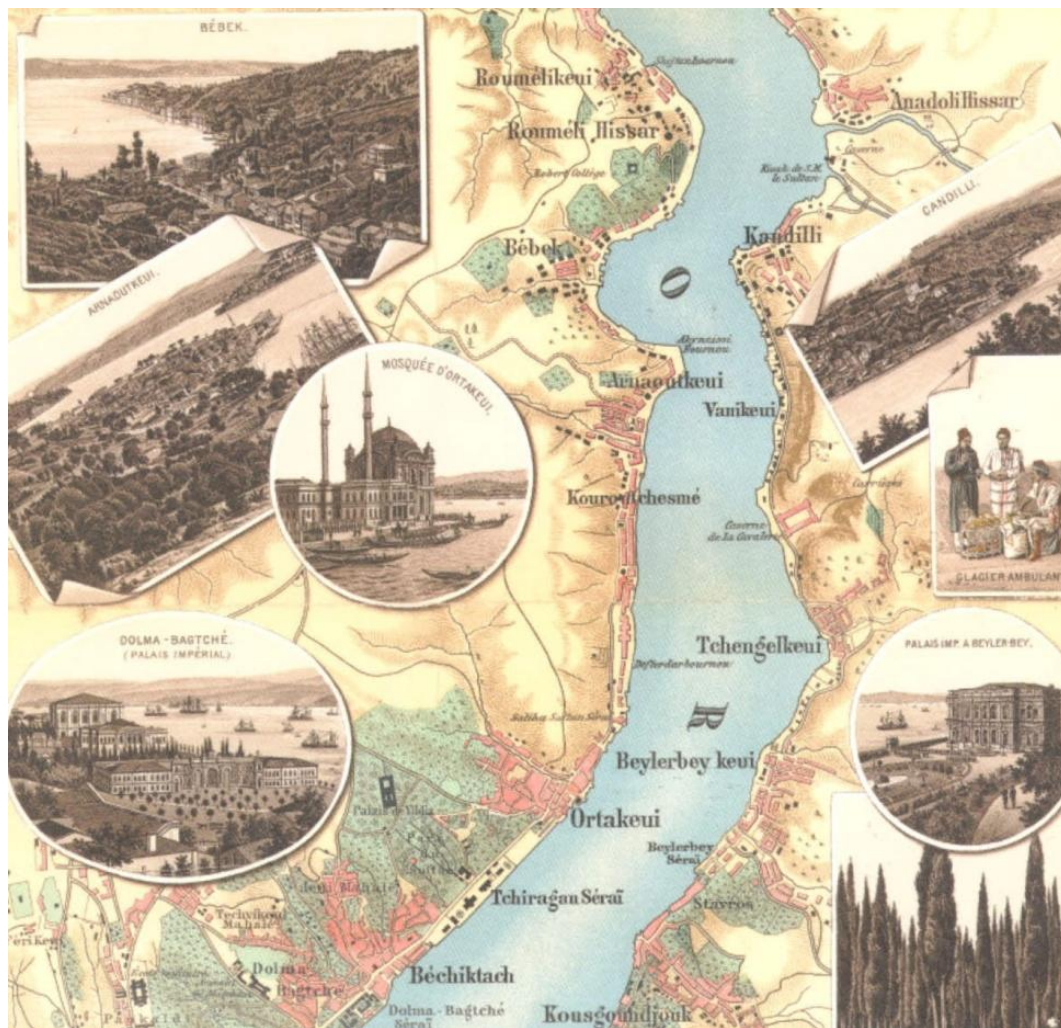


Figure 27: A map of Bosphorus

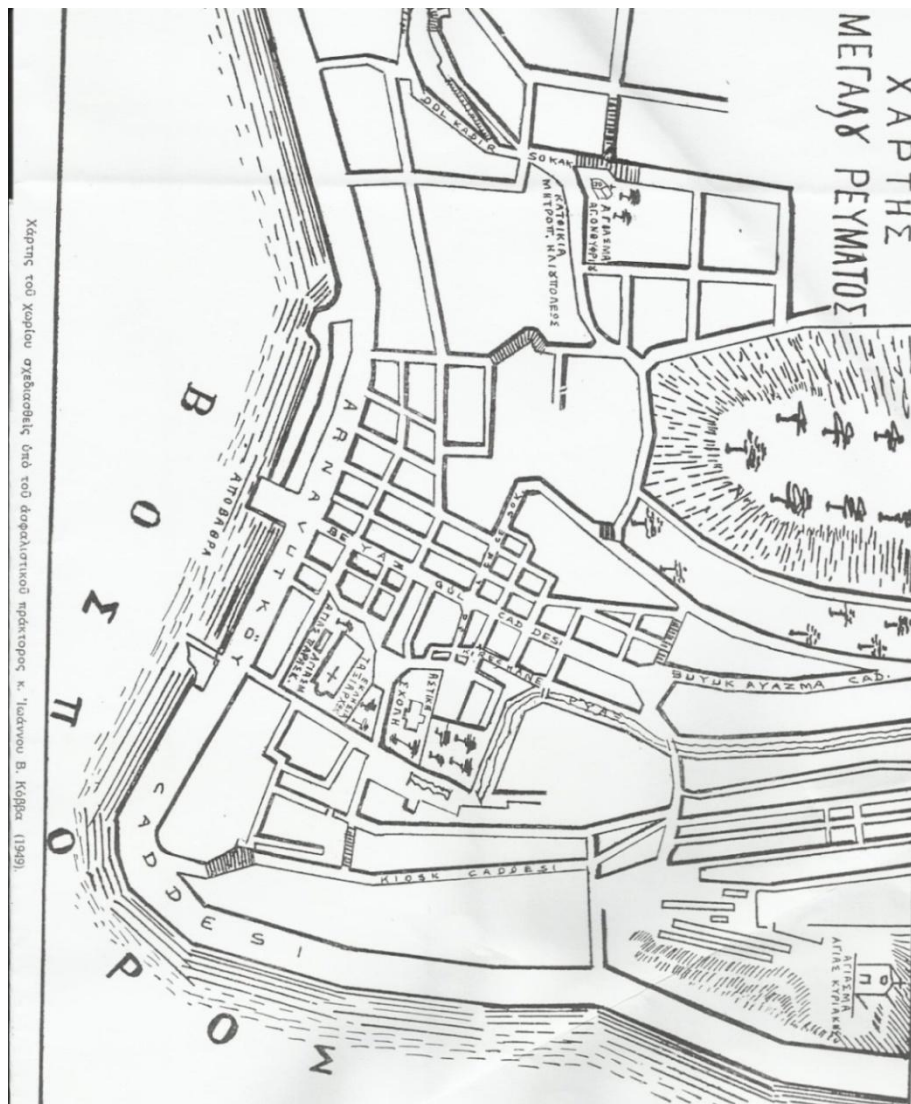


Figure 28: Map of Akıntıburnu (Great Currency) is designed by the insurance agent Mr. Ionnis Kovvas in 1949.

3.3.2. Socio Economic History

Socio economic structure of Arnavutköy neighbourhood should be analyzed in interaction with political and cultural aspects which determine the conservation planning in the area.

Arnavutköy, was covered with vineyards until famous İpsilantis family grew first strawberry.

Aleksandros İpsilantis was born in 1726 in Istanbul, brought the position of management of

Eflak Beyliği.¹⁰¹ In 1785 Ottoman- Russian war, he was accused of working for Russians and he was dismissed. After III. Selim forgave Aleksandros who emigrated to Australia then, continued his position until 1798 and came back to Istanbul.¹⁰² He is associated with Arnavutköy strawberry which was known with 2 types. Frenk strawberry was in darker colour and bigger size in comparison to Ottoman strawberry, small and pink.¹⁰³ People in Arnavutköy village were occupied with cultivating strawberry as well as other fruits and vegetables.¹⁰⁴ There were a lot of people who were occupied with animal breeding and farming. There was a pig breeding farm which was next to the Orthodox church.¹⁰⁵ Arnavutköy as a coastal area is very suitable for fishing and even today, fishermen go fishing. All these harvests from farms and fishes were brought to markets with boats and boating was also common occupation.



Figure 29: Arnavutköy Entrance 1888-90

¹⁰¹ Aras Neftçi, Birsan Babacan, and S. Faruk Göncüoğlu, *İstanbul'un Semtleri: Arnavutköy* (İstanbul: İstanbul Büyükşehir Belediyesi, 2003), 13

¹⁰² Neftçi, Babacan, and Göncüoğlu, 15

¹⁰³ Ibid.

¹⁰⁴ Ibid.

¹⁰⁵ Ibid.

3.3.3. Urban Planning Evolution Throughout Time



Figure 31: A map of Arnavutköy (1946) in the scale of 1/5000

In figure 32, the area in 1946 when the rapid urbanization and modernization with concrete buildings and illegally built houses dominated the core which comprises of Ottoman timber houses.



Figure 32: A map of Arnavutköy (1966) in the scale of 1/5000

In the figure 33, there is a rapid increase of structures which were divided with narrow streets and majority of these buildings were surrounded around the coastal area whereas upper hills were still surrounded with trees but there were signs of squatter houses.



Figure 33: A map of Arnavutköy (1982) in the scale of 1/5000

In the figure 34, the boulevards and open spaces with some landmarks and the widening of coastal road opened up the historic area of Arnavutköy and made timber structures more visible for people to appreciate.



Figure 34: Aerial map of Arnavutköy in the scale of 1/5000

Today, Arnavutköy as seen in figure 35, has clear urban pattern with its small plots, narrow streets which are almost comprises of stairs and it is at the centre of Istanbul. Although it has undergone a lot of changes after the fires and later developments, the central urban form is maintained.

3.3.4. Vernacular Architecture

Palaces- listed

After the Ottoman dynasty left Istanbul, their properties become abandoned and in Turkish Republic period, these historically significant buildings were not used and left to decay but some of them survived and the listed ones in Arnavutköy are İzzetabad Ksarı, Beyhan Sultan Palace (Akıntıburnu Palace, Çiftesaraylar) and a nameless, lost heritage which is now used as an apartment.

İzzetabad Kasrı



Figure 35: İzzetabad Kasrı

This timber clad concrete structure is built by İzzet Mehmet Pasha in the second period of 18th century and it has 8 columns in the entrance as in the figure 37.

Beyhan Sultan Palace



Figure 36: Beyhan Sultan Palace

Beyhan Sultan Palace was located in the place of Çifte Saraylar as in figure 38.¹¹² After the emperor II.Mahmuts daughter got married with Sait Paşa, it became known as Sait Paşa Yalısı.¹¹³ In the period of the Ottoman ruler Abdülmecid, this palace was demolished and rebuilt with brick clad on the exterior, timber in the interior.¹¹⁴ It was completed in 1856.¹¹⁵ In

¹¹² Ünal Kurtçu, *Boğaziçi Tiryakiliği* (Ankara: Elips Kitap, 2007), 307.

¹¹³ Ibid.

¹¹⁴ Ibid.

¹¹⁵ Kurtçu, 309.

1924, it was used as tobacco store, then used as Bosphorus High School and it was closed down.¹¹⁶ It was demolished when Boğaziçi-Bebek road was expanded.¹¹⁷



Figure 37: Arnavutköy From the Slopes of Sarrafburnu 1870

The term “yalı” is used to describe the houses along the Bosphorus coast with one, two or three storey and it reflects the social life in Ottoman period which is differentiated in style according to social status. Yalı has a monumental meaning in the history of architecture in Turkey especially in Ottoman times these types of coastal houses were owned by wealthy families.

Moreover, their frontal facade can be seen even from the distant and the only transportation from yalı was by boats. In Turkey today, there are not many yalı structures left and even the

¹¹⁶ Ibid.

¹¹⁷ Ibid.

ones which are still in use have changed in terms of living conditions in these houses. They are not reflections of the wealthy, comfortable, luxurious lifestyles of Ottoman dynasty instead they are partially used and survived in today's modern life style.



Figure 38: Bosphore Arnaoutkeuy 1890-1895



Figure 39: Arnavutköy ve Kandilli 1890-1895

On the Üvez street in number 3, there is a four storey apartment “K.Stavridu” which was built by the Rum architect G. Kovvas is known as one of the first built apartments in Arnavutköy.



Figure 40: Facades of yalis along the Bosphorus in Arnavutköy

The most striking feature of Arnavutköy is its yalis along the Bosphorus coast and as in the figure 40, facades of these seaside structures are preserved and in the plate 6, the section along the Arnavutköy- Bebek Street signifies the horizontality of the coastal settlement but in comparison to the inland structures, it reveals vertical impact in the area.

On the other hand, the perpendicular street to the Arnavutköy- Bebek Street, Beyazgül Street's partial section as in the plate 5, reveals that behind the yalis, there are buildings which are more modest in height as the topography gets slope up towards to the hills. The front facades of these buildings which face to the Beyazgül Street become wider and additional floors can be seen. In addition to that, as in the plate 5, Beyazgül Street facade view is not preserved as it is in the yali example as in the plate 6. The timber clad material is used less and the carvings, decorations cantilevered overhangs are not dominant on Beyazgül Street when it is compared to yali views. The use of reinforced concrete material in buildings is mostly seen on Beyazgül Street and it is not compatible with historic building facades.

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PLATE 6

PARTIAL
SECTION
ALONG
ARNAVUTKÖY
BEBEK
STREET
1:300

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As seen in figure 41, listed “Yalı”s, summer houses along the Bosphorus shoreline mostly 20th century buildings that are built in Turkish Republic.



Figure 41: One of the listed yalis along the Bosphorus shoreline, building no: 4

There are two entrance facades; one on the front and the other one on the rear. Today it is not in use and it has a bay window on the rear facade which is used as a balcony at the upper floor. On the frontal facade, there is a balcony at the second floor, three openings that are covered with gable roofs. The windows are shaped with depressed arches. Under the ground floor windows, the facade is covered with brick.



Figure 42: One of the listed yalis along the Bosphorus shoreline, building no: 5

Brick, stone structure has stone clad facade, depressed sash windows and in second floor there is a balcony and a “cumba” which faces to Kurucesme Street as seen in figure 43.



Figure 43: One of the listed yalis along the Bosphorus shoreline, building no: 6

This brick masonry structure has a timber clad facade and it is renovated extensively. The roof windows on the frontal facade and the rear facade are in round arch shape. A projected window in the first floor and moreover the balcony in the second floor stands on the “cumba” as well as the balcony in the top floor as seen in figure 44.

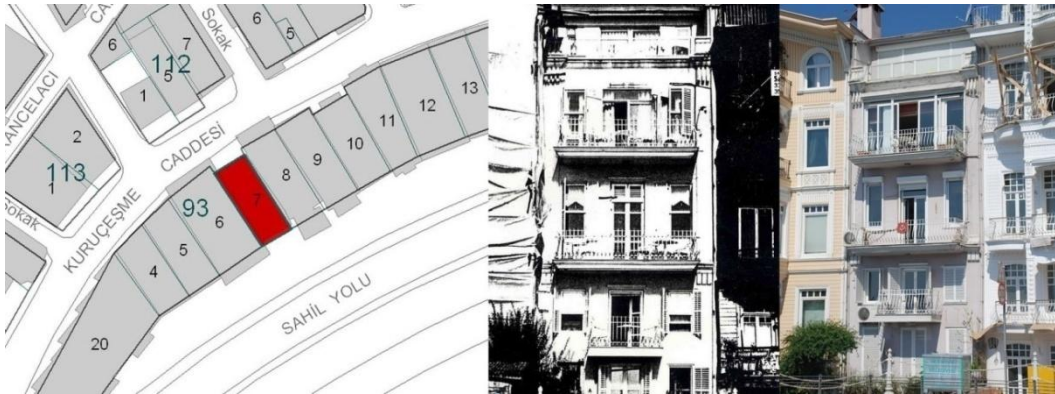


Figure 44: One of the listed yalis along the Bosphorus shoreline, building no: 7

This stone masonry structure has balconies at each floor as in the figure 45.



Figure 45: One of the listed yalis along the Bosphorus shoreline, building no: 8

Timber, stone and a reinforced concrete structure have distinctive features including balconies, two supporting columns at each floor and onion shaped dome on the roof as seen in the figure 46. The top floor is known as “cihannüma” which is a tower looking floor that is covered with glasses and underneath the eaves of the roof there are geometric shapes ornamentations.



Figure 46: One of the listed yalis along the Bosphorus shoreline, building no: 9

The yalı has projected balconies which are known as cumba, and on the ground floor facade openings are shaped with brick arches as in figure 47. There are wooden craft ornamentations on the frontal facade which faces to the shore road.



Figure 47: One of the listed yalis along the Bosphorus shoreline, building no: 10

The reinforced concrete structure has balconies at each floor which starts from the first floor and these balconies are supported with two columns and on the rear facade there is a rectangular projected part as seen in figure 48. Its authenticity remains still even though the structure material has changed.



Figure 48: One of the listed yalis along the Bosphorus shoreline, building no: 11

The brick masonry structure has plaster on the facade and in the second floor it has “cumba” and in the upper floor it continues with a balcony. In the ground floor on the frontal facade the balcony has an oval plan but in the 1st and 2nd floor the plans of the balconies are rectangular as seen in figure 49.



Figure 49: One of the listed yalis along the Bosphorus shoreline, building no: 12

It is a reinforced concrete structure with a timber clad facade and on the front facade there is a rectangular planned balcony and on the rear facade it has a rectangular planned “cumba.”

There are columns with relief printing designs at each side of windows and the top floor timber facade is decorated.



Figure 50: One of the listed yalis along the Bosphorus shoreline, building no: 13

Its structure is reinforced concrete and the facade is timber. On the frontal facade, there are balconies at 1st and 2nd floors whereas the projected part at the third floor is used as balcony in the upper floor as seen in figure 51.



Figure 51: One of the listed yalis along the Bosphorus shoreline, building no: 14

The reinforced concrete, timber structure has two entrances from both facades. The front facade has a bay window in the second floor and the top of it is used as a balcony and on the rear facade it has a balcony in the second floor and the top of it, there is a bay window. In the figure 52, the cantilevers are timber on the front facade and there are decorated pillars in the balcony on the front facade.

3.3.5. Building Analyses

Buildings of Interest

Arhangelos Church: no more exists

Ayia Strati Taksiarhis Church

Profiti İlia, was dedicated to prophet Ilyas, was located on the way to Etiler where there was Arnavutköy stream in older times.¹¹⁸

It is located on the parallel street of Beyazgül Street, which is Satıs Meydanı Street and it has nearly 1600 years of history. This church was damaged several times mostly because of

¹¹⁸ Aras Neftçi, Birsen Babacan, and S. Faruk Göncüoğlu, *İstanbul'un Semtleri: Arnavutköy* (İstanbul: İstanbul Büyükşehir Belediyesi, 2003), 27

invasions before Istanbul was conquered and at the end of these invasions with the order of Fatih Sultan Mehmet (conquerer of Istanbul) its stones were used in building Rumeli Hisar.¹¹⁹ Sometimes it was burnt down and sometimes it was survived despite of minimal damages but with the help of people it was rebuilt. The church which was renewed in 1834 and 1845 was open to praying ceremonies until the severe earthquake in 1894.¹²⁰ It was known as the biggest Greek Orthodox Church built in Ottoman period in comparison to the other churches in Tarabya and Taksim.¹²¹

The church was planned as rectangular in the east-west direction. It has a gable roof in the east- west coordinate was divided by the gable roof in the north-south direction. At the center of the division there is an octagonal dome. The projected part in the east, was covered with half dome and the facade is built of ashlar stone.



¹¹⁹ Neftçi, Babacan, and Göncüoğlu, 25

¹²⁰ Neftçi, Babacan, and Göncüoğlu, 27

¹²¹ Ibid.

Figure 52: Ayia Strati Taksiarhis Church

Arnavutköy Tevfikiye Mosque

Tevfikiye mosque which was built in 1832 is located next to the historical building; police station. In this period, Ottoman architecture evolved in terms of westernization, classicism, and neoclassicism which brought antique architectural components such as columns, arches and austere pediments and these elements are reflected on the mosque's facades. The rectangular planned mosque has one minaret, it comprises of ground floor and first floor. Its roof is a timber structure and roof covering is tile roof. The mosque has a brick masonry structure, a courtyard which is located in a high terrace. Its entrance door has inscription on it.



Figure 53: Arnavutköy Tevfikiye Mosque

Arnavutköy Police Station

The two storey police station was built in 19th century and it has an Ottoman-Turkish architectural style. It was renewed and changes in the plan were made and the original function of the building was resident and it has changed to police station. The symmetrical

facade has three pediments and only one entrance and it has a wide backyard. On the frontal facade there is a medallion in the middle and an inscription in “ampir” style which reflects neoclassic Ottoman architecture. The central part of the frontal facade is recessed 2 meters from the two wings as seen in figure 55.



Figure 54: Arnavutköy Police Station

Arnavutköy Rum Cemetery

It is situated across to the Ayia Strati Taksiarhis Church and it was surrounded with cypress trees and it covers a large area which extends to Ulus. In 1865 after the cholera epidemic in the area, dead people were banned from being buried in the houses or mosques and church courtyards and therefore Rum people found the empty land up on the hills in the village and buried them to this cemetery.¹²² This large area which is dedicated to minorities proves that there were many Greek people who lived in Arnavutköy in the past.

¹²² Aras Neftçi, Birsen Babacan, and S. Faruk Göncüoğlu, *İstanbul'un Semtleri: Arnavutköy* (İstanbul: İstanbul Büyükşehir Belediyesi, 2003), 29

Arnavutköy American Girl College



Figure 55: Arnavutköy American Girl College

The listed monument is a timber structure with timber clad has 5 ionic columns.

Arnavutköy Fountains

The oldest fountain in the area is known as the one which was built in 1791 by İzzet Mehmet Paşa and another one is located in Akıntıburnu and built by Beyhan Sultan.¹²³ There are rococo elements on the fountain which has two facades as seen in figure 57.

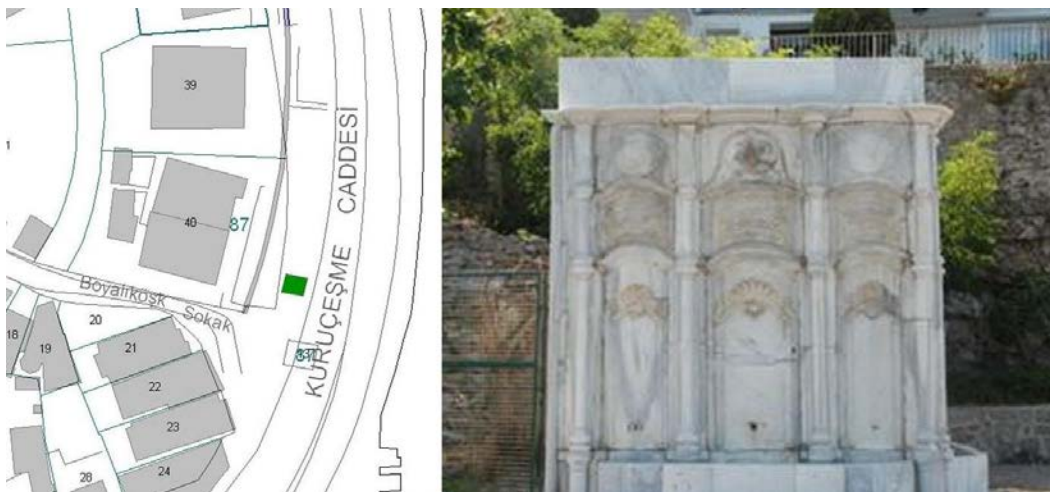


Figure 56: Listed Fountain in Arnavutköy

¹²³ Ibid.

Ayazmalar

Ayazma: a term which was used by Orthodox Christians for water source or spring. It is accepted as holy water which comes from the term of “Hagia” but the word has changed in time to ayazma.

In Arnavutköy, it is known that there are ten ayazma in total although some are not used today. There is one in the courtyard of Ayia Strati Taksiarhis Church and its water source dates back to Byzantium period.¹²⁴

Ayia Kiryaki Ayazması: It is located on Elçi Street however; because new buildings were built in the area, it is situated in the rear side of these buildings.

Ayia Paraskevi Ayazması: It was dedicated to Ave Ayia Paraskevi and it was located at the junction of Satis Meydanı Street and Kamacı Street in the past. In 1999 it was renewed completely.¹²⁵

Ayia Vlaherna Ayazması: It is situated on Yaghane Street in a parking area and today it is dilapidated and in need of restoration.¹²⁶

Ayios Onufrios Ayazması: It has 7-8 century history and it was located in the back of American Girl College and today it is not used.¹²⁷

Ayia Marina Ayazması: It was used to be across the Taksirerhis Church but in 1924 it was destroyed.¹²⁸

¹²⁴ Aras Neftçi, Birsen Babacan, and S. Faruk Göncüoğlu, *İstanbul'un Semtleri: Arnavutköy* (İstanbul: İstanbul Büyükşehir Belediyesi, 2003), 29

¹²⁵ Ibid.

¹²⁶ Ibid.

¹²⁷ Ibid.

Ayia Fotini Ayazması: It was used until 1955 and it is located on Dubaracı Street.¹²⁹

Ayia İönnis Ayazması: It was used in 19th century on the top of the pinewood hill.¹³⁰

Ayia Triada Ayazması: Today, it no longer exists.

Ayios Konstantinos and Ayia Eleni Ayazması: Its source comes from rain water and located on the Arnavutköy hills today it is forgotten.¹³¹



Figure 57: One of the Existing Ayazmas

This masonry brick structure has gable roof and still is functioned as ayazma although it had undergone major renovations, it is listed and in a fairly good state as seen in figure 58.

Arnavutköy Bath

It was situated in between Boyalı Köşk Street and Abdülhak Molla Street, in 1930s it survived as a ruin. In front of it there was the house of Poet Faruk Nafiz Çamlıbel and it was facing to Sadrazam İzzet Mehmet Pasha's köşk which was known as "İzzetabad."¹³²

¹²⁸ Ibid.

¹²⁹ Ibid.

¹³⁰ Ibid.

¹³¹ Aras Neftçi, Birsan Babacan, and S. Faruk Göncüoğlu, *İstanbul'un Semtleri: Arnavutköy* (İstanbul: İstanbul Büyükşehir Belediyesi, 2003), 30

Arnavutköy Rum Schools

The sources do not mention about any schools until 1752. It was stated that in 1752, there was one storey cottage in the courtyard of the church.¹³³ However, the education was only based on reading, writing and religious courses that were taught by the priest in the village.¹³⁴ Since 1811, it was mentioned that there were two schools in the opposite of the church.¹³⁵ Today known as Private Karma Rum Primary School is built as boys school in 1902 and in 1930s it had 200 students, it barely survives with the students who come from nearby neighbourhoods.¹³⁶

Armenian Primary School

It belonged to Arnavutköy Armenian population, in the beginning of 1930s, there were 40 students.¹³⁷ It was shut down after Armenians left the area.

The existing small scale structures such as ayazmas can be reused in modern times as water sources. The fountains and ayazmas must be maintained as street elements and become a part of urban pattern.

¹³² Ibid.

¹³³ Ibid.

¹³⁴ Ibid.

¹³⁵ Ibid.

¹³⁶ Ibid.

¹³⁷ Ibid.

3.3.6. Later Interventions



Figure 58: Squatter area

It is clearly seen that there are one or two storey squatter houses that are located on different levels which are connected with steps, on the top of the hills of Arnavutköy especially on the Sekbanlar, Beyazgul, and Kirechane Street as seen in figure 59. In comparison to the other concrete high rise buildings, these houses do not interrupt the silhouette of the area and in fact; it shows that there is a different character of the area where the slope increases. They are built with low budget and these houses have views of Bosphorus from different angles and they do not interrupt their views looking from top of each other as in seen figure 60.



Figure 59: Squatter Houses on Kirechane Street



Figure 60: Illegally Built Houses up on the Hills of Arnavutköy

As the slope decreases, scatter houses' height increases, they do not have gardens and the green areas become less and more importantly they are built adjacent to each other, there is no space in between as seen in figure 61, 62.

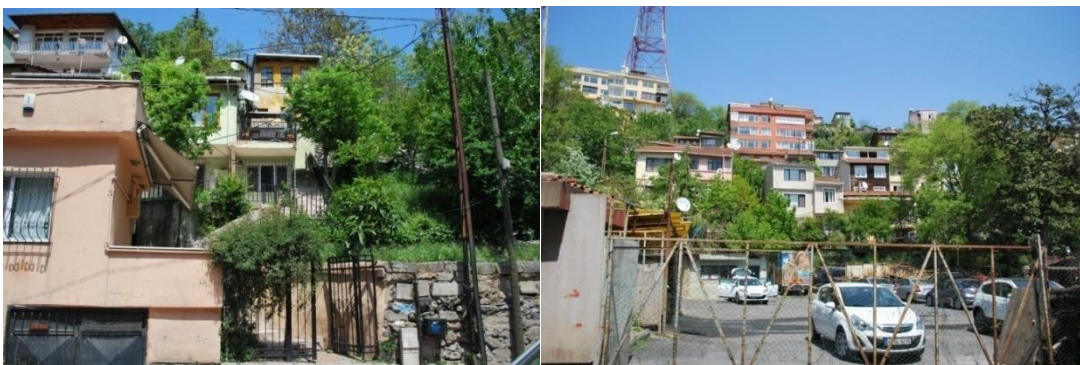


Figure 61: A View from Kirechane Squatter Houses

On the parallel street of Beyazgul Street, Kirechane Street, reinforced concrete structures which were built in recent years do not follow the similar facade view as the historic buildings do, as seen in figure 63. The streets in Arnavutköy are narrow, stepped, sloping but the new buildings on the streets have wide facades which contradict with the traditional houses which have narrow, timber clad facades with balconies, bay windows that overshadow streets, as in the figure 64.



Figure 62: Building Facades on Kirechane Street



Figure 63: Facades of Later Developments on Kirechane Street

Gentrification

Arnavutköy is among the neighbourhoods in Istanbul where gentrification processed due to replacement of original occupants who were Greek people before they were forced to leave the area after 6-7 September 1955 when the political problems arose between Turkish and Greek people. Their departure from the area caused complications, inequalities in terms of occupation of the buildings which once belong to Greek community.

In the case of Arnavutköy, there is a positive meaning of gentrification.¹³⁸ Arnavutköy is a central area and it makes its location special and it becomes a very desirable place to live and rich people settled in the area.¹³⁹ Up on the hills there are sites, on the shoreline, there are yalis but all these new and old developments and people are mixed.¹⁴⁰ Merchants, rich and educated high class, middle class are all mixed and adapted to the area.¹⁴¹

However, the term of gentrification is not related to urban conservation in the example of Arnavutköy. Arnavutköy as a Bosphorus settlement has income due to its plots, housing rent. In 1980s, a lot of restoration work of buildings took place and this process led to gentrification.

Building of the Third Bridge

In 1998, Arnavutköy was faced with the suspended plan for the 3rd Bosphorus Bridge and its connecting roads in the city's plans in the scale of 1/5000. The planned construction of the bridge over the Bosphorus was a thread for the village which preserved its identity over the years. The bridge was going to connect Arnavutköy on the European side to Kandilli on the

¹³⁸ Beria Bayazitlioglu Rodwell, interview by the author, Melrose, July 11, 2013.

¹³⁹ Ibid.

¹⁴⁰ Ibid.

¹⁴¹ Ibid.

Asian side; however, the proposed 3rd Bosphorus Bridge contradicts with several laws including conservation of historic buildings and sites along the Bosphorus. The building of this bridge would force the destruction of shoreline structures and destroy the iconic view of Ottoman houses. Therefore, the people of Arnavutköy become united for preserving their old neighbourhood by protesting against the project.

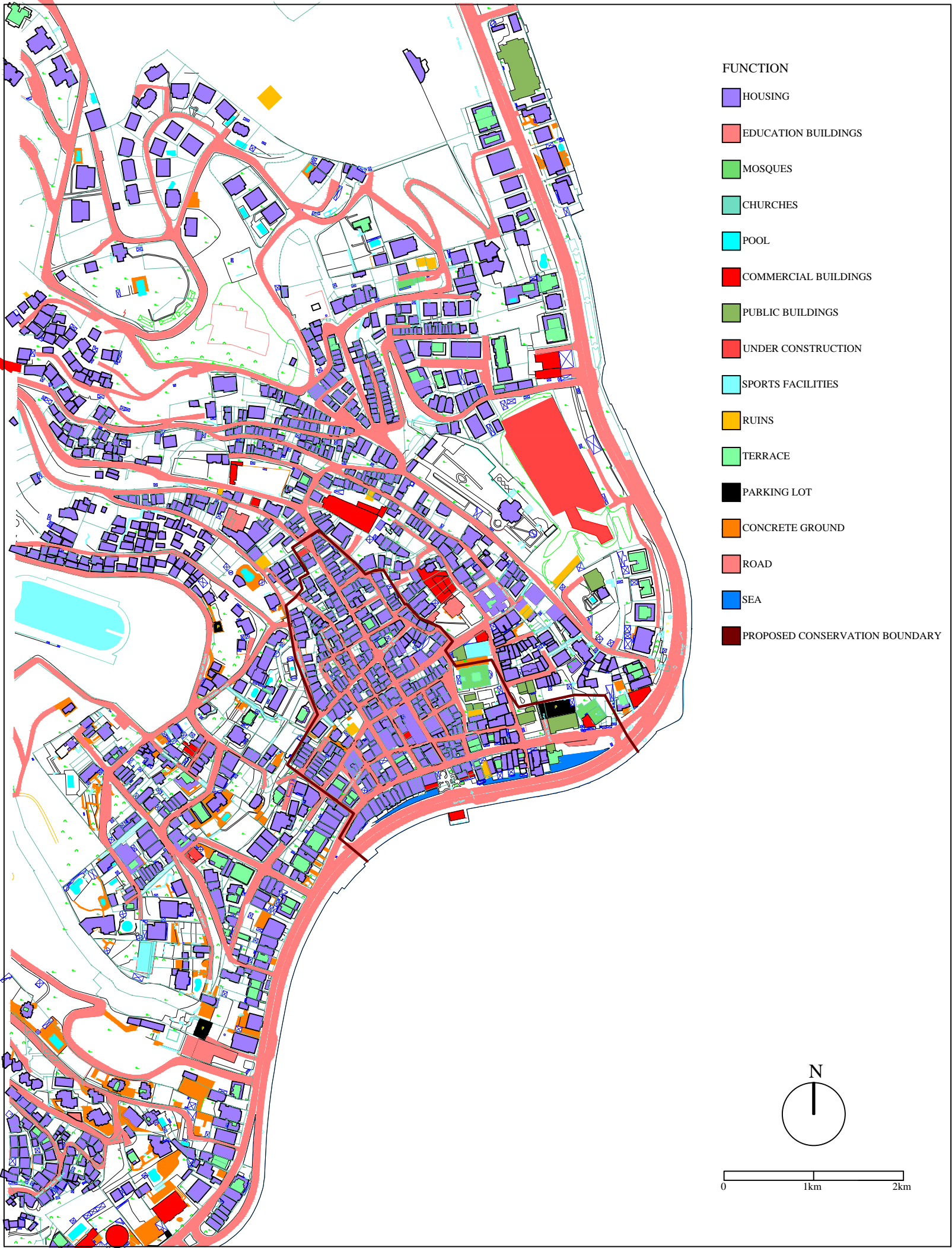
3.3.7. Building Usage Analysis

Building function analysis shows that housing and commercial buildings dominate the area and although it is not clear in the plate 1, ground floor of some buildings are also included in commercial areas especially along the Beyazgül Street and the Bosphorus coastline.

Moreover, the green areas are in density in comparison to the other neighbourhoods in Besiktas which loses its natural landscape in the way of urbanization. Although Arnavutköy preserves its natural sources, in dense of housing, it might be faced with dangers of losing them in the future. There are many dilapidated structures and they become lost heritage among the new developments.

3.3.8. Buildings and Townscape

In the plate 2, building height is analyzed in the area and it gives a clue about the town silhouette. The studies on site and analysis demonstrate that settlements on the shoreline, mostly consist of 4 and 5 storey buildings and 3 and 4 storey structures are in density in the proposed conservation area. The historic core, and the shoreline is quite valuable lands and for that reason, the owners build extra floor even it is illegal in terms of building conservation laws. As a shore oriented neighbourhood, in Arnavutköy, there is a decrease in building height towards to settlements up on the hills where there are only 1 or 2 storey houses as seen in figure 65.

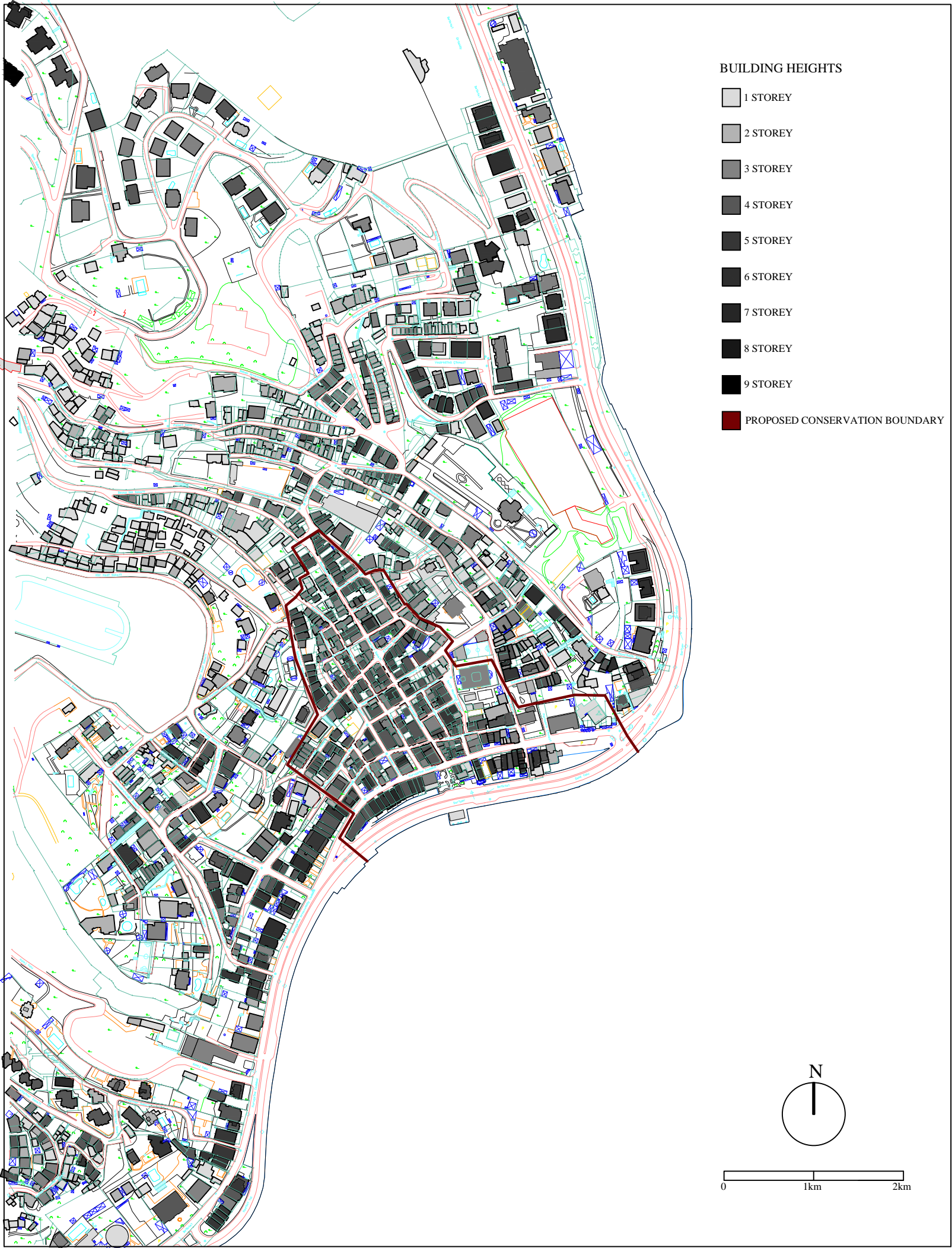


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PLATE 1

FUNCTION
1:5000



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These valuable properties in Arnavutköy are in demand of building new apartments, shopping malls, supermarkets and nowadays, the balanced proportion in building height is under threat of changing townscape.



Figure 64: From Beyazgül Street to Bosphorus



Figure 65: The settlements on the Hills with the Background View of Bosphorus Bridge

3.3.9. Listed Structures

According to the data from Besiktas Municipality and Istanbul Culture and Tourism Ministry inventory, there are many listed buildings that have not listing grades.

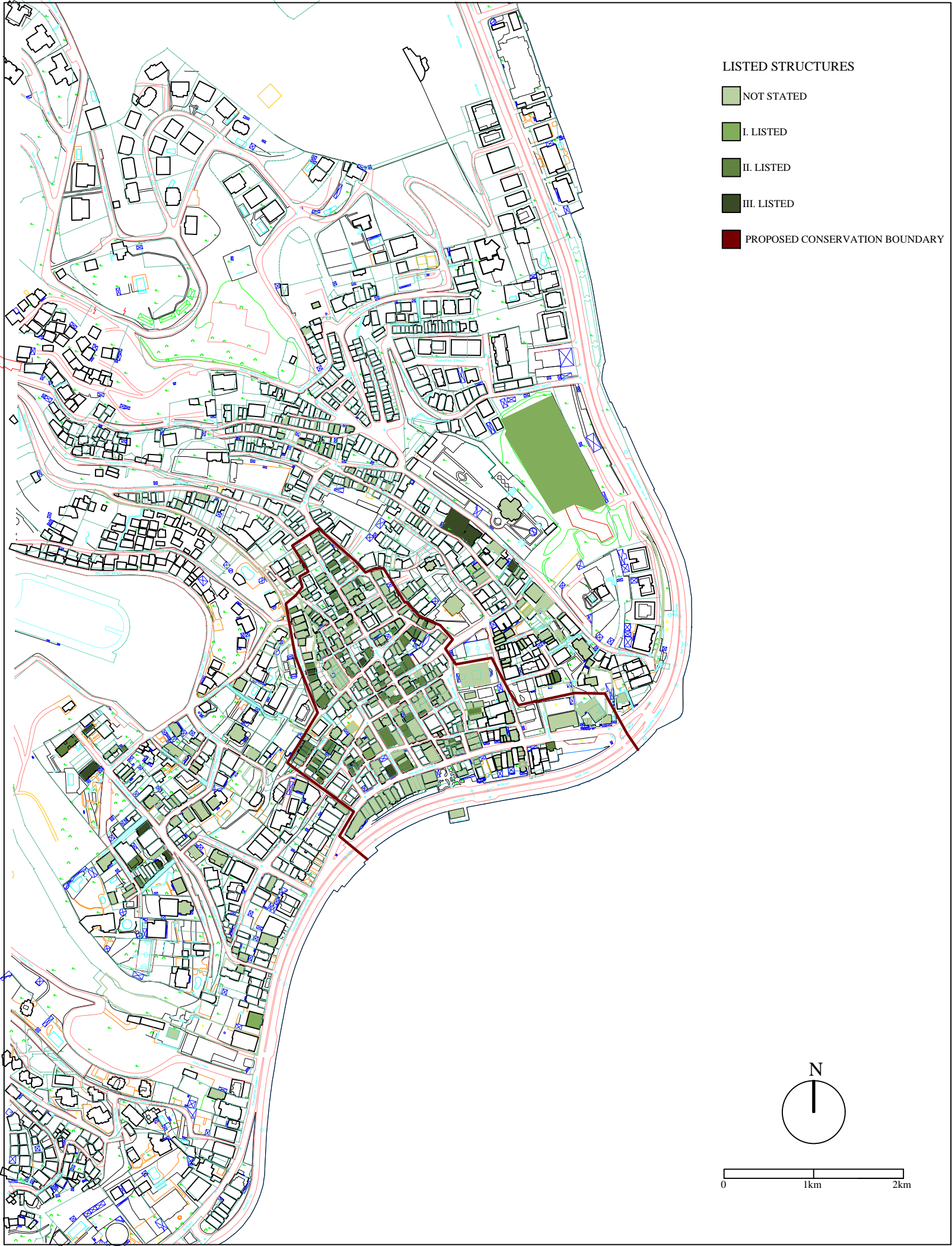
It is presumed that because some of these buildings were listed in the past, they were not updated and the ones which are listed with grades are mostly designated in recent years. Therefore, there is a mixture of listed buildings with grades and without grades.

In the map, retaining walls, vaulted ruins, arched remaining structures, listed plot boundaries, listed fountains are also involved in the listed structures analysis.

3.3.10. Building Chronology

In the plate 4, due to the limited information on building age in the area, shows that most of the buildings were built in the Ottoman period and some of the Turkish Republic era structures are representations of Ottoman architecture.

Moreover, Ottoman architecture partly has layers of Byzantium period and these layers of different epochs should be taken into consideration in the urban conservation plan.

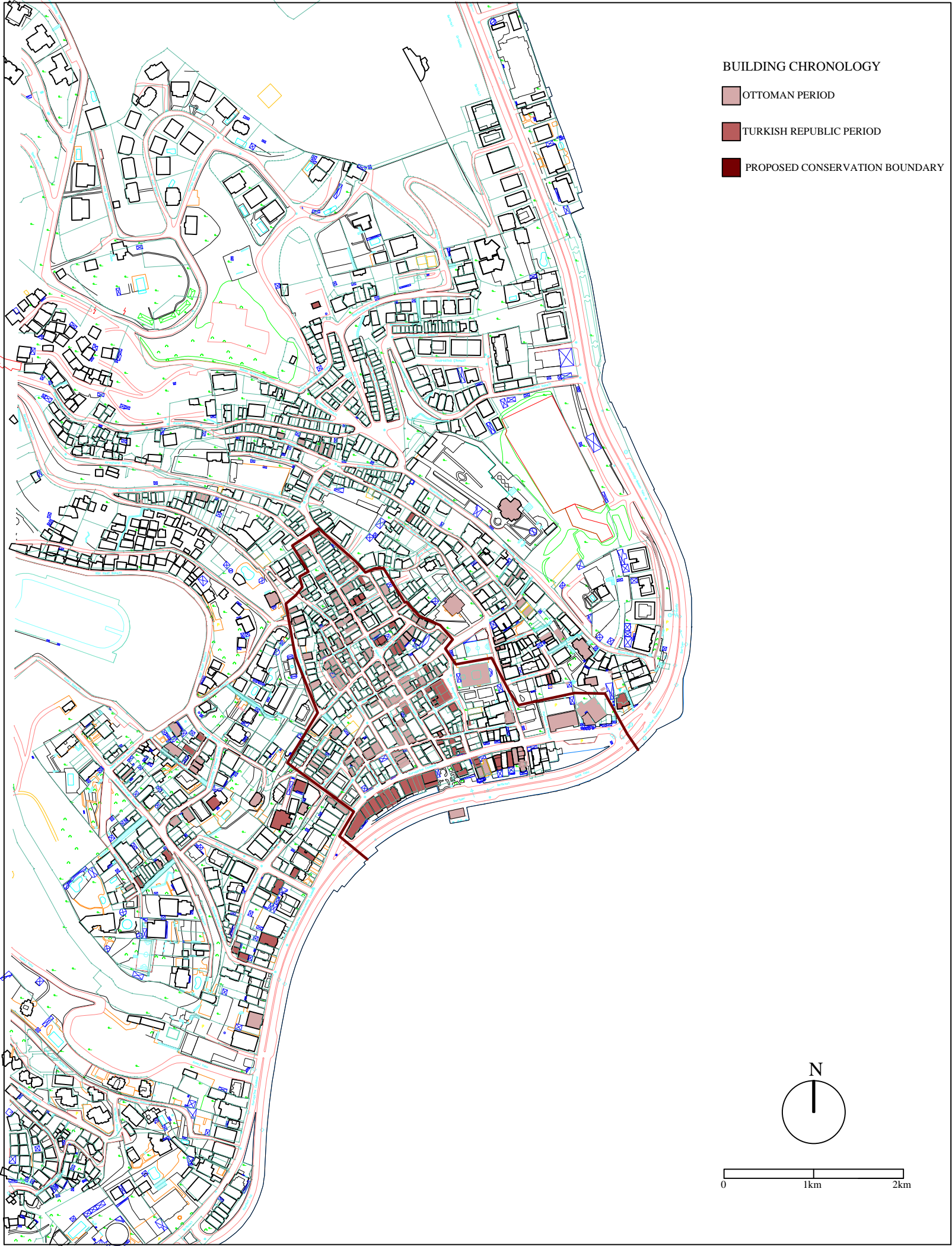


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PLATE 3

LISTED
STRUCTURES
1:5000



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PLATE 4

BUILDING
CHRONOLOGY
1:5000

3.3.11. SWOT

In the analysis of the area, the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats have been overviewed.

Strengths

- Density of listed buildings
- Potential trading centre
- Existing preserved green areas
- Central location as a Bosphorus settlement
- Existence of vernacular architecture in the coastal zone
- Conserved landscape areas
- Well integrated street- buildings relation
- Multicultural society
- Educated people who are aware of conservation
- Potential unoccupied buildings that can be refunctioned

Weaknesses

- Neglected buildings and inadequately maintained structures
- Lack of communal areas
- Redundant functions such as ayazma, schools and churches that once belonged to Greek community in the area
- Rapid urbanization with the increase of building heights, traffic density, urban growth
- Squatter settlements on the hills
- Later additions to the historical buildings which are used as storages by the merchants
- Concrete structures that don't fit into the historic neighbourhood
- Parking of transportation vehicles on the pedestrian walkways which block the way
- Independently conducted restorations works which lead to non uniform urban pattern
- Lack of study in urban conservation, area analysis in order to have a sustainable neighbourhood

Opportunities

- Increased restoration works in recent years
- Improvements in consistency of planning policies
- Continuity in commercial life, growing economy
- Potential green areas
- Distinctive traditional timber structures
- Funding from international corporations, institutions
- Conservation conscious among people
- Existence of social organizations such as Boğaziçi Arnavutköylüler Derneği
- Potential touristic opportunities

Threats

- Increasing density in traffic due to the location of Arnavutköy
- The suggestion of building 3rd bridge in the area and possible disruption of townscape
- Increasing in illegally built additions and squatter areas
- Dominating view of high rise buildings
- Lack of investment in the area

4. Conservation Area

4.1. Proposed Conservation Area

Conservation Area Boundary

In the plates 1, 2, 3 and 4, there is a proposed conservation boundary for Arnavutköy neighbourhood. The conservation area boundary is determined with shoreline, including Mumhane Street which is perpendicular to the shoreline. It covers Francalacı, Tayyareci Suphi, Bakkal Street that still maintain the authentic Ottoman urban pattern. In these plots, buildings are adjoining and there is a narrow stepped street that divides the group of adjacent buildings to two to reach the upper level which is Eglence Street. Eglence Street dominates the plan horizontally by dividing Beyazgül Street from Dubaracı Street; therefore the boundary continues along the street until the junction of Eglence Street and Sekbanlar Street. Sekbanlar Street is where the squatter houses located and that is why the boundary cuts Duvarcı Street vertically and leaves out later developments along the Sekbanlar Street.

However, Beyazgul Street plots are very significant in terms of evolution of plots as seen in figure 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29. There is a certain pattern which Beyazgül Street follows and it could be the conservation boundary limit but Kirechane Çıkmazı Street as seen in figure 66 is also implicated to indicate the certain form of the plot which faces Karakavak Street. It has two plot length and one building width and it is partially Ottoman era formation. It also faces to Arnavutköy Rum School and it extends to Satış Meydanı Street which becomes a square. It preserves its form from Ottoman times and including the Aya Taksiarhis Church, Police Station and Tevfikiye Mosque, it ends at the junction of Kuruçeşme street and coast street.



Figure 66: A view from Kireçhane Street

4.2. Problems within the Conservation Area

In Turkey there are urban rehabilitation, urban renewal, urban reconstruction, urban revival, urban redevelopment, urban regeneration projects rather than urban conservation works.

Taking consideration into Fener-Balat regions where there can be seen an accomplished conservation work applied in practice with the help of international organizations. Although these areas have not yet grown as fast as Arnavutköy in recent years, there were Jew and Greek population and their effect in these historic settlements. The historic layers of the settlements show similar aspects with Arnavutköy.

Arnavutköy is known with its timber architecture examples which were renovated as concrete buildings and the main concern is that the timber Ottoman neoclassic architectural heritage will be lost in urban growth.

Moreover, the existing skyline will be dominated by higher buildings so the regulations for building heights must be controlled strictly for the area.

The yalı silhouette must be preserved with the background of Bosphorus woods which form the conserved landscape and there should be a balance between green areas and urban pattern.

On the hills, the growth of later settlements should be controlled and they should be in harmony with the character of the area. Although these structures do not disrupt the skyline, for future development, they should be under control. Landscape- urban relation should be analyzed.

There are inconsistent planning applications in Bosphorus settlements which must be united in terms of preservation of both historic sites and landscape. Master plans must include not only conservation of individual monuments but also urban form, street pattern, landscape and silhouette and the plans should not be just two dimension, they should cover problems that exist in three dimension.

Although Kuzguncuk resembles Arnavutköy, instead of middle class society in Kuzguncuk, there is a high class, educated class in Arnavutköy and both of these areas should be conserved considering their different economic structures.¹⁴² An authentic town in İzmir,

¹⁴² Beria Bayazitlioglu Rodwell, interview by the author, Melrose, July 11, 2013.

Turkey; Birgi there are 1/2000 scaled facade, street rehabilitation project which requires restoration of facades along the streets.¹⁴³

The problem with the conservation project in the area is that because the plans of the houses are not upgraded, villagers do not have enough money to do restoration works, users of the houses are changing.¹⁴⁴ A new population comes from big towns and settle in the area but they use the houses for a short period especially for the summer period and that changes the function of the village.¹⁴⁵

In the centre of Besiktas, it is hardly seen that there are remains of untouched, authentic, traditional Istanbul houses.¹⁴⁶ However, in Arnavutköy, the social relations with community, merchants still sustain as well as connection between commercial areas with historic neighbourhood and with new developments.¹⁴⁷ The main parallel streets to Bosphorus shoreline are also part of remaining urban pattern.¹⁴⁸

According to Beyazitlioglu, because the people who live in Arnavutköy are well educated, conscious about conservation, sustainability of the town can be applied.¹⁴⁹ Updating the old buildings to modern lifestyle, control of the energy usage, decomposition of disposals, renewable energy would be a starting point of long term conservation.¹⁵⁰

¹⁴³ Ibid.

¹⁴⁴ Ibid.

¹⁴⁵ Ibid.

¹⁴⁶ Ibid.

¹⁴⁷ Ibid.

¹⁴⁸ Ibid.

¹⁴⁹ Ibid.

¹⁵⁰ Ibid.

5. Future Development

5.1. Potential Areas for Development

It is realized that there are few written documents about Arnavutköy and it is recommended that cultural activities in the area should be encouraged to inform people about the history, architectural features of Arnavutköy. Photographs, architectural exhibitions and theatrical plays which indicate the majority of Greek population in older times and its effect on the area would raise interest in the area if they address not just adults but also kids. However, this interest must be based on preservation of national identity rather than economic or political benefit. Documentaries about the evolution of the area, drive-in cinema which was popular once can be some of the activities that are helpful to raise interest in maintaining of the area.

Because of geographical features, the area was divided into groups; coastal settlements, inland area which comprises of commercial activities and hillside houses but people who live in different zones should gather only for one reason which is to preserve the neighbourhood. There are also private, enclosed sites which are not close to neighbourhood in Arnavutköy. These enclosed areas should be open to local people. Furthermore, people can afford energy efficiency in the area by using simple methods. Some historically important, abandoned buildings or ruins can be turned into outdoor museum or exhibition which is significant in terms of promotion of local heritage. Besiktas municipality and social organizations can open some courses for local people to develop skills that are special for the area. Fishing, conservation of timber structures, building restoration techniques, renewable energy might increase employability too. Barely surviving schools, communities from nearby neighbourhoods can have mutual projects with Arnavutköy people to protect their legacy.

Short Term Options

- Better advertising of listed structures
- Online on tourist attractions
- Building design guidelines published
- Improvement of walking paths
- Improvement of green areas, parks
- Bosphorus tours from Arnavutköy pier
- Preparation of Restoration Information Sheets as in figure A.70
- Educational workshops on urban, building conservation

Long Term Options

- Improved presence of public transportation and walking paths to avoid overcrowded areas which caused by private vehicles
- Teaching centre for both young generation and existing users of historic buildings to inform people about restorations
- Encourage people to upgrade their buildings with energy efficiency
- Foundation of private, non governmental organizations that aim to work benefit of the neighbourhood

5.2. Conservation aims

Use of sustainable materials for listed buildings

- Refunctioning of abandoned structures
- Support civil society organizations in preserving the neighbourhood
- Monitoring and minimising of concrete structures
- Prevention, removal of unnecessary additions by commercial functions
- Encourage people in Arnavutköy to conserve the area
- Taking precautions for unconscious conservation works
- Preservation of intangible values of the area as well as tangible values
- Conservation of natural assets as a part of urban pattern
- Set up education programs for owners of historic structures in the field of conservation
- Publication of more written sources about the historical and cultural value of the area
- Increase the usage of traditional methods and materials in restoration works
- Creation of a master plans in urban scale for the area
- Expansion of areas for parking so that transportation will not damage street pattern
- Encourage nearby neighbourhood population to use historically significant functions such as ayazma, Greek schools, and churches.

6. Conclusion

The conservation laws in Turkey mentions the existence of urban conservation and it is described as in international charters but there is no urban conservation work in that extent in Turkey. The heritage values should not be restricted with buildings. There are small scale structures like ayazma, fountains which are part of heritage values in the area as well as urban form elements such as streets, archaeological ruins, landscape, channel and square in the area. As a recreational settlement along the Bosphorus, Arnavutköy maintained the “neighbourhood” lifestyle which describes the identity of Istanbul settlements. The inauthentic changes in built fabric such as building reinforced concrete buildings with incompatible facades, floor additions cause deterioration of the historic settlement which preserved itself. However, the increase of housing and transportation facilities and interventions after 1950s become a threat to authenticity of the area. Based on the topography, the area was divided into the different zones; urban and rural area. The rural areas in Arnavutköy comprise of scattered housing whereas the shoreline houses become iconic centre of the urban area.

Analyses show that the listing of some properties does not always represent that they are remaining of original structures. The data which is adapted from Besiktas Municipality and Istanbul Cultural and Tourism Inventory bring out the fact that listed buildings might be imitations of original structures that do not exist anymore. However, these structures, retaining walls, or archaeological remnants were documented so it is known that they existed once. As a representation of original, they are still maintained to symbolize the Ottoman heritage.

It is clear that there are some buildings which were listed just because there was an old building before it was built. However, now the new building that is located in the old

buildings lot does not reflect any meaning of that matter which is to conserve traditional buildings.

In terms of building conservation in Arnavutköy, historic buildings have been “restorated” in theory but in practice, looking at the original state of the buildings, their materials, functions, plans have changed after years of neglect and at the end, they were simplified. In meaning, all the ornamentations which belong to Ottoman period, and art and craft works such as wood engraving become less significant in modern times.

The area is very significant not just with its richly ornamented buildings that date back to Ottoman period but also with its natural landscape; woods, and vaulted ruins both in underground and aboveground levels as seen in figure 67.

This district is quite distinctive in terms of its location along the Bosphorus and it also has an urban form that combine natural recreational areas with commercial core and settlements which are on top of the hills and connecting them with narrow stepped streets which supports the Ottoman era neighbourhood. Natural sites are fairly conserved but it is not considered as part of the urban formation in the area. When there is an attempt to an urban conservation plan, there should be a master plan that includes both natural, archaeological, architectural artefacts, heritage to be preserved. If the listed green areas are solved in urban pattern, there will be a success in conservation plan.



Figure 67: Listed Arched Structure and Its Restoration



Figure 68: A View from the Bosphorus Shoreline

The main problem is that the urban renewal, urban transformation projects are mostly in demand because it is located on Bosphorus which is one of the internationally recognized areas in Istanbul as seen in figure 67, and it draws attraction of people here to invest on the

lands, settlements. The economic and political reasons are the most problematic issues when it comes to preserve the area as it is. All these renewal projects lead to possible profits and outcomes in short terms so that investors make money out of it while the town is erased by the new developments or it is left to decay. However, if the projects which have been done under the term of conservation both in theory and practice aim to provide sustainability of the historic area, it would increase the value of the town even more.

Considering the nearby towns, villages that are located across the Bosphorus have similar problems and if these towns are considered as whole, Bosphorus settlements, in urban conservation planning, there will be more unified, compatible growing of the neighbourhoods. For example, urban renewal project in Kuzguncuk which is located across Ortaköy on the Asian side of Bosphorus became an area of interest after the several restoration projects have been started in the area but these activities increased the rents and economic status of the area which was known with its middle class population. Moreover, it was a complete transformation of the area with a new high class population and with restoration works that do not represent an honest approach, the area gained a new identity. This new identity did not compete with the rest of the Bosphorus settlements whereas it is considered as a big success in conservation.

There are some restoration projects of historically significant monuments which might be example in practice for a group of buildings including the streets so that conservation can be done in a more realistic way. The Ottoman and Turkish Republic architectural identity of the area should be maintained when the European conservation role is taken as an example for practical applications. International organizations should be referenced but the identity of the neighbourhood should remain intact.

In terms of tourism, the area is very popular especially Bosphorus coastline but there are Ottoman houses behind the “yalı”s. Therefore, the urban conservation plan should cover inlands as well to maintain the architectural heritage as a whole. It is intended to find out more about the character of the area and examine condition of the buildings, use of land and buildings in different levels; one for ground floor and one for upper floor, occupancy of the structures, construction materials, land ownership, harmony with original character, transportation analysis, sections from the hill settlements, in depth analyses on facades and a recent socio economic structure study and for further studies these researches will give more insight about urban conservation of Ottoman era neighbourhood as this study is open ended reference for future works in Arnavutköy.

In conclusion, in order to correspond the needs of historic neighbourhoods like Arnavutköy, the existing condition of the area should be appreciated as a whole and according to the urban layers, the state of structures must be defined clearly. Lost heritage, non used listed structures, historically significant properties should be revived and sustained even they are not used in modern Republic era. Although the area is known with its yalı structures, there are timber Ottoman architecture examples as the slope of the topography increases. The stepped streets which are linked to these timber structures in different levels become hidden under the trees and these zones have the character of a village. Therefore, in the centre of Istanbul, in Arnavutköy there is a well maintained village- town relation that is lost in many other settlements in Istanbul.

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